INTRODUCTION TO

PHILOSOPHY

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CHAPTER 1

THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

1.1. The Definition of Philosophy

According to its etymology, the term "philosophy" means "love of wisdom." At first, the early Greek thinkers had described themselves as "wise men" but tradition has it that, out of humility, Pythagoras had called himself a "philosopher" (*philosophos*) or "friend or lover of wisdom." From then on, the term "philosopher" had replaced that of "wise man." The tradition which credits Pythagoras for having been the originator and interpreter of the term "philosopher" is usually traced back to Heracleides Ponticus. In his *Tusculanae Disputationes*,[1[1]] the Roman eclectic philosopher and master of oratory Cicero has left us what appears to be the essentials of Heracleides' account. He tells us that Pythagoras had once visited Leon who was the tyrant of Phlius, and when asked by his host what particular art or skill he possessed, he is said to have replied that he was a "philosopher" and thus, did not possess any particular practical skill. Then, Pythagoras gave what is called a "panegyric analogy" to explain what he meant by the term "philosopher": "The life of man resembles a great festival celebrated....before the concourse from the whole of Greece. At this festival some people sought to win the glorious distinction of a crown; and others, again, were attracted by the prospect of material gain through buying and selling. But there were also a certain type of people, and that quite the best type of men, who were interested neither in competing, applauding nor in seeking gain, but who came solely for the sake of the spectacle itself, and, hence, closely watched what was done and how it was done. And so also we, as though we had come from some city to a crowded festival, leaving in like fashion another life and another nature of being, entered upon this life. And some were slaves of ambition, and some were slaves of money. But there were a special few who, counting all else for nothing, closely scanned the nature of things. These gave themselves the name of 'philosophers' (*sapientiae studiosi*) – and this is the meaning of the term 'philosophers.' And just as at these festivals the men of the most exalted education looked on without any self-seeking intent, so too, in life the dispassionate contemplation of things and their

[1[1]] CICERO, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, V, 3, 8-10.

rational apprehension (*cognitio*) or understanding by far surpasses all other pursuits."[2][2]

Philosophy begins in wonder. All men by nature desire to know,[3][3] and philosophizing begins with an attitude of wonder. Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, writes that "it is owing to wonder that men both now begin, and at first began, to philosophize. They wondered... about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and the stars, and about the origin of the universe. And a man who is puzzled and wonders thinks himself ignorant. Hence, even the lover of myth in a sense is a lover of wisdom or a philosopher, for the myth, too, is composed of wonders. Therefore, since men philosophized in order to escape from ignorance, they were pursuing knowledge or science in order to know, and not for any utilitarian purpose...Evidently, then, we do not seek this kind of knowledge for the sake of any other advantage...we pursue it as the only free science, because it exists for its own sake."[4][4]

The philosopher is a lover of wisdom, one who seeks wisdom for its own sake and not for any other motive, for a person who seeks a certain thing for some other motive loves the motive more than the thing sought. Philosophy is strictly speaking knowledge that is sought for its own sake and not for the sake of some other knowledge.[5][5] In the *Protrepticus*, Aristotle holds that "it is by no means strange that philosophic wisdom on first sight should appear to be devoid of immediate practical usefulness and, as a matter of fact, might not at all prove to be advantageous. For we call philosophic wisdom not advantageous in a practical sense of the term, but good. It ought to be pursued, not for the sake of anything else, but rather exclusively for its own sake. For as we journey to the games at Olympia for the spectacle itself – for the spectacle as such is worth

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[2][2] CICERO, *op. cit*. See also: IAMBLICHUS, *De Vita Pythagorica* (or, *De Vita Pythagorae*) XII, 58 (31, 20-32, 22 ed. Deubner); IAMBLICHUS, *Protrepticus*, 53, 15 ff. (Pistelli); ATHENAEUS, *Deipnosophistae*, XI, 463DE. One should mention, however, that Diogenes Laertius credits this story to Sosicrates rather than to Heracleides Ponticus (*Diogenis Laertii vitae philosophorum*, VIII,8) and relates (*ibid*, I,12) that Pythagoras called himself a "philosopher" (*philosophos*) or "lover of wisdom" rather than a "wise man" because "no man is wise but God alone." This brings to mind the thoughts of Plato, who, in his *Phaedrus*, writes: "Wise I may not call them (*scil.*, those whose compositions are based on the knowledge of objective truth and who can defend or prove their compositions), for this is a great name which belongs to God alone. But 'lovers of wisdom' is their proper and befitting title" (278D).

[3][3] Cf. ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, I, 1, 980a 1.

[4][4] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, 982b 12ff. See also ARISTOTLE, *Rhetoric* 1371a 30ff: "Learning things and wondering about things, as a rule, is pleasant. For wondering implies the desire to learn and to know. In this the object of wonder is an object of desire..." ; PLATO, *Theaetetus* 155D: wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder."

[5][5] It must be said that though philosophy is the ultimate knowledge in the natural order, as regards both speculative and practical questions, nevertheless, there is, over and above philosophy, the Ultimate Knowledge which is supernatural theology. It is superior to philosophy in the absolute sense.

more than 'much money' – and as we watch the Dionysia not in order to derive some material profit from the actors – as a matter of fact, we spend money on them – and as there are many more spectacles we ought to prefer to great riches: so, too, the viewing and contemplation of the universe is to be valued above all other things commonly considered to be useful in a practical sense. For, most certainly, it would make little sense were we to take pains to watch men imitating women or slaves, or fighting or running, but not think it proper to view or contemplate, free of all charges, the nature and true reality of everything that exists."[6][6]

The human person yearns for truth. He is naturally inclined to this end by the fact that he is a rational being. Philosophy is a quest for a profound knowledge about reality that goes above and beyond (but not against) spontaneous, common sense knowledge. A certain knowledge about reality, including certain ultimate truths, can be attained by man even without having recourse to philosophical, scientific reasoning, so long as he is not corrupted by false ideologies and erroneous philosophies that go against the certainties of common sense such as absolute idealism and Marxism which negate, for example, the principle of non-contradiction, a self-evident truth. The natural spontaneous knowledge of man, uncorrupted by such positions and by bad moral habits which tend to blind man from a correct perception of reality, is indeed capable of affirming the existence of the things in the world around him, of being certain of the immortality of his own soul and of the souls of other people around him (whom he affirms as really existing), and of acknowledging the reality of a First Cause of the universe. Some basic convictions of spontaneous knowledge include: the fact that one thing cannot be another thing; the consciousness of one's own identity; the fact that there exist other human persons who are similar to oneself ; the fact that there are living beings and non-living beings; that there is such a thing as death, that man becomes old and dies; the fact that there is a distinction between reality and a dream; the fact that there are just actions and unjust actions; the fact that man can tell the truth or tell a lie; that fact that life is a value, something that is desirable; and that fact that man has free will. The list of these convictions, of course, can go on. The various philosophical systems that go against the certainties of spontaneous common sense knowledge (such as the systems of rationalism, monism and idealism) should be held suspect. If a philosopher, for example, tells you to doubt that extra-mental reality exists or that a cat and a man are reality one

[6][6] ARISTOTLE, *Protrepticus*, now lost except for some fragments (I. Düring designates this "fragment" quoted above as B 44. See: I DÜRING, *Aristotle's Protrepticus: An Attempt at Reconstruction*, Göteborg, 1961, p. 67). The fragment is found in a passage in Iamblichus' own *Protrepticus*.

substance, he should be reprimanded for such a brazen defiance of common sense.

Philosophy studies the realities affirmed by common sense[7][7] in a scientific way, giving this pre-scientific knowledge greater precision, making distinctions and clarifications, and by describing and classifying its certainties. For example, let us take the case of the existence of God. It is certain that God's existence can be arrived at through the sole power of human reason. But we must make a distinction. Man can arrive at a knowledge that God exists apart from faith either through a spontaneous or pre-scientific knowledge or through a philosophical reasoning which is scientific and metaphysical. Regarding this spontaneous knowledge of God's existence, Etienne Gilson writes: "There is a sort of spontaneous inference, wholly untechnical but entirely conscious of its own meaning, in virtue of which every man finds himself raised to the notion of a transcendent Being by the mere sight of nature in its awesome majesty. In a fragment from one of his lost works, Aristotle himself observes that men have derived their notion of God from two sources, their own souls and the orderly motion of the stars. However this may be, the fact itself is beyond doubt, and human philosophies are belatedly discovering the notion of God....As a matter of fact, mankind does have a certain notion of God; for centuries after centuries men without any intellectual culture have obscurely but powerfully felt convinced that the name *God* points out an actually existing being, and even today, countless human beings are still reaching the same conviction and

[7][7] Daniel Sullivan explains that common sense "refers to the spontaneous activity of the intellect, the way in which it operates of its own native vigour before it has been given any special training. It implies man's native capacity to know the most fundamental aspects of reality, in particular, the existence of things (including my own existence), the first principles of being (the principles of identity, non-contradiction, and excluded middle), and secondary principles which flow immediately from the self-evident principles (the principles of sufficient reason, causality, etc.). One of the points that links philosophy and common sense is that they both use these principles. They differ however in the way that they use them. Common sense uses them unconsciously, unreflectively, uncritically.…Philosophy on the contrary uses these principles critically, consciously, scientifically. It can get at things demonstratively, through their causes. It can therefore defend and communicate its knowledge. The certainties of common sense, the insights of a reasoning which is implicit rather than explicit, are just as well founded as the certainties of philosophy, for the light of common sense is fundamentally the same as that of philosophy: the natural light of the intellect. But in common sense this light does not return upon itself by critical reflection…*Philosophy, therefore, as contrasted with common sense, is scientific knowledge; knowledge, that is, through causes* (D. SULLIVAN, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, Tan Books, Rockford, IL, 1992, p. 248). For Antonio Livi, common sense (*sensus communis*) refers to the "organic entirety of certainties of fact and principle that are common to every man and precede every critical reflection…The contents of common sense are basically the universe, the 'I' as subject qualified by the soul, the moral order or natural law, and God. Such factual certainties imply the intuition of first principles and constitute the rational premises of a possible act of faith in the encounter with Revelation"(A. LIVI, *Il principio di coerenza*, Armando, Rome, 1997, p. 186). For the best comprehensive study on the subject of common sense, see the three books of Antonio Livi: *Filosofia del senso comune*, Ares, Milan, 1990; *Il senso comune tra razionalismo e scetticismo*, Massimo, Milan, 1992; *Il principio di coerenza*, Armando, Rome, 1997.

forming the same belief on the sole strength of their personal experience."[8][8] The philosophical scientific and rational demonstration of God's existence is rooted first of all in the common sense certainty of God's existence: "every demonstration of the existence of God presupposes the presence of a certain notion of God which is itself not the conclusion of a demonstration. This is precisely the notion of God of which Saint Paul says that, through the mere sight of His creatures, God has manifested it unto them."[9][9] What does the philosopher do to the common sense certainty that God exists, something that is common to all men? He "transfers these spontaneous convictions to the ground of metaphysical knowledge. He then asks himself: what is the natural value of these natural beliefs? Is it possible to turn our natural notion of God into a rationally justified knowledge? Can the affirmation that there is a God assume the form and acquire the value of a scientifically demonstrated conclusion?"[10][10] The philosopher then proceeds to philosophically demonstrate the existence of God in an *a posteriori* manner (from effect to cause). This he does because, though God is maximally self-evident in Himself, He is not evident with respect to the human mind, which is limited and imperfect. We cannot grasp the Essence of God and therefore we must proceed from His effects which are known to us, that is, our point of departure for the ascent to God must be the things of this world. To the various real phenomena rooted in experience but interpreted metaphysically we apply the principle of causality which evidences their relative, dependent and caused character. Then, one demonstrates that the effective and actual reality of the contingent phenomena cannot be explained by postulating the intervention of an infinite series of contingent causes. Finally, one comes to the conclusion that the only valid explanation for these contingent phenomena is God. This is the philosophical way to the Supreme Being which does not go against the common sense certainty of His existence but is a rational, scientific elaboration of it.

Philosophy is human wisdom but how is philosophy to be strictly defined? For this purpose it shall be necessary to understand philosophy as first philosophy or philosophy at its supreme level, which is metaphysics. What will be said of it in the absolute sense (*simpliciter*) will be applicable relatively (*secundum quid*) to the other lower departments of philosophy.

Philosophy is not practical knowledge or the knowledge of practical affairs that consists in acting well. Rather, it is wisdom that essentially consists in

[8][8] E. GILSON, *Elements of Christian Philosophy*, Mentor-Omega, New York, 1963, p. 55.
[9][9] E. GILSON, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
[10][10] E. GILSON, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

speculative knowing. It is speculative rather than practical. Be reminded that we are forming a definition of philosophy in the strict sense, that is, of first philosophy or metaphysics. There is indeed a practical philosophy which is called ethics (the philosophy of action and conduct), but it is a lower department of our subject matter and so, the strict definition applies to it relatively (*secundum quid*).

So, philosophy consists essentially in speculative knowing. But of what? Of causes with certainty. Since science is defined as a certain knowledge of causes, philosophy is truly a science. What exactly is a science? Science, in the broad sense, means not only knowledge but specifically a knowledge that is evidenced and therefore certain. The evidence of a given point of knowledge lies in the fact that we recognize its causes or reasons or both. Thus, science is defined as the "knowledge through causes." A science is any defined branch of knowledge which shows the truths that belong to its sphere of competence in a clear and orderly fashion and with integrity or completeness, and which adds to these truths the causes which make these truths intelligible or knowable with certainty to the human mind. Philosophy meets the above mentioned requirements for it sets forth the truths that unaided reason can discover about reality, presenting these truths in a manner that is clear, orderly, logical, and complete, and it gives, at each and every step of its development, the evidence and the proofs which the human intellect requires to give its full and unwavering assent to the doctrines proposed. Thus, philosophy is rightly called a science.

Now by what medium does philosophy know? It knows by human reason, by the natural light of the human mind. It is a human science whose rule or criterion of truth is the evidence of its object. In this regard philosophy is different from supernatural theology, the superior science whose light is the Divine Revelation of God Himself. Philosophy is knowledge through unaided human reason, while theology is knowledge through reason and, over and above this, Divine Revelation and the light of faith.

The science of philosophy is concerned with everything, all things. The whole of reality is encompassed in its object. Since it considers all things, philosophy is rightly described as a universal science. This, however, does not mean that philosophy absorbs all the other human sciences like medicine, biology, geology, botany, psychology, etc. That philosophy is a universal science does not mean that there is only one science, philosophy, and that all other human sciences simply become departments of it. This was the error of

Descartes who taught that philosophy simply absorbed all the other human sciences, it being the sole science. On the other hand, philosophy cannot be thought of as being absorbed by the other sciences, it being no more than their systematic arrangement. This was the error of the positivist Comte. The cause of the errors of Descartes and Comte was due to a failure to distinguish between the material and formal objects of philosophy. The secondary sciences deal with secondary causes or proximate explanations while philosophy, universal and supreme among the human sciences, is concerned with ultimate causes and first principles.

Now we must determine what the material and formal objects of philosophy are, for though philosophy is a universal science, and because of this is the chief among the human sciences, it possesses its own distinctive nature and object, in virtue of which it differs from the other human sciences. But in order to know what the material and formal objects of philosophy are we must first know what is meant by the material and formal objects of a science. Paul Glenn explains that "the *object* of a science is its scope, its field of investigation, its subject matter. Further, it is *the special way* in which it does its work in its field, or it is *the special purpose* which guides it in its work. Thus the object of any science is two-fold. The subject-matter, the field of inquiry, is the *material object* of the science. The special way, or purpose, or end-in-view, which a science has in dealing with its subject-matter or material object is the *formal object* of that science. Many sciences may have the same *material object*, for many more or less independent inquiries may be prosecuted in the same general field. But each science has its own distinct and distinctive *formal* object which it shares completely with no other science. That is why this object is called *formal*; it gives formal character to the science; it makes the science just what it is formally or as such. To illustrate all this. Many sciences deal with the earth under one aspect or another. Such, for example, are geology, geodisy, geography, geonomy, geogony, and even geometry. All these sciences study the earth; they have therefore the same material object. But no two of these sciences study the earth in the same special way or with the same special purpose. Geology studies the earth in its rock formations; geodisy studies the earth in its contours; geography studies the earth in its natural or artificial partitions; geonomy studies the earth as subject to certain physical laws; geogeny studies the earth to discover its origins; geometry in its first form was a study of the earth in its mensurable bulk and its mensurable movements. Thus, while all these sciences have the same material object, each of them has its own formal object. If two sciences were to have the one identical formal object, they would not really be two sciences at all, but one science. It is manifest that a

science is formally constituted in its special character by its formal object; it is equally manifest that a science is distinguished from all other sciences by its formal object."[11][11] In sum, the material object is the subject matter, while the formal object is the special way in which that subject matter is studied.

Philosophy, being the universal and supreme human science, studies all reality. *All things* make up the *material* object of this science. What is the *formal* object of philosophy, the aspect under which it views this material object? Its *formal* object is *all things in their ultimate causes and first principles*. Philosophy, then, has for its object all things, all reality, but in all things and all reality it investigates only the ultimate causes and first principles. The other human sciences, on the other hand, have for their material object some particular area of being, of which they investigate only the secondary causes or proximate principles. In light of this one can say that, of all the sciences in the natural order, philosophy is by far the most sublime. It is the supreme and most profound of all the sciences that investigate reality by the light of human reason alone. Philosophy is wisdom in the strictest sense for it falls within the ambit of wisdom to study the highest causes.

Let us now give a precise and strict definition of philosophy: *Philosophy is the science of all reality in its ultimate causes and first principles, studied using the light of natural reason.*

We have been describing philosophy in the strict sense which is first philosophy or metaphysics, but this description may be extended to philosophy in general if it is understood as a body of which metaphysics (which is properly speaking wisdom) is its head. Philosophy, generally speaking, is a universal body of sciences which deals with ultimate causes and first principles (whether absolutely ultimate causes and first principles, which is the case with first philosophy or metaphysics, or with ultimate causes and first principles in a particular determinate field, which is the case with the other branches of philosophy such as philosophy of nature, philosophical psychology, ethics, etc.).

The science of philosophy is divided into two main parts: speculative philosophy and practical philosophy. Speculative philosophy is philosophical knowledge for its own sake and not geared towards our own profit and improvement, which is the task of practical philosophy. Speculative philosophy

[11][11] P. GLENN, *Theodicy*, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1950, pp. 4-5.

is divided into three main parts: 1. philosophy of nature (which contains the philosophy of inanimate nature or cosmology, and the philosophy of animate nature or the philosophy of living beings, of which philosophical anthropology is a part) ; 2. philosophy of mathematics ; and 3. metaphysics (which has three main parts: general metaphysics, gnoseology or philosophy of knowledge, and philosophy of God or natural theology). Practical philosophy is divided into two main parts: 1. philosophy of art ; and 2. ethics (which is divided into general ethics and special ethics). Logic, the science and art of correct thinking, is not a part of philosophy but merely an introduction to philosophical thought (and also to the particular sciences, that is, it is propaedeutic to science).

Philosophy is truly wisdom, wisdom of the natural order, as wisdom concerns itself with the highest and ultimate causes of all things,[12][12] and, as was said, this is precisely the task of philosophy. Philosophy or natural wisdom's role is to guide and judge the other forms of human knowledge as the perfect judgment about something is obtained only taking into account its highest or ultimate causes.[13][13] Wisdom, because it is concerned with the highest causes of all things, ultimately leads to a consideration of God as the First Cause and Ultimate Last End of all things. The philosopher's ultimate task, therefore, is to order everything in relation to God, the Ultimate Cause of all things. That is why the supreme branch of philosophy is philosophy of God or natural theology, which is the highest level of metaphysics (it is philosophy *par excellence*). All other branches of philosophy are ultimately directed to the study of God. The true philosopher orders everything to God, order meaning to arrange things in relation to an end or design, relating means to ends. True philosophy is Theocentric philosophy, the reverent, ordered contemplation and viewing of the wondrous universe in order to arrive at a better understanding of God, the Maker of the finite cosmos, His existence, nature, attributes, and operations. In the domain of philosophical, dispassionate contemplation, humble wonder and reverent awe, reinforced by a disciplined and ordered intellect, the philosopher discovers the primary source and the sure foundation of all truth: God.

Though philosophy requires a great deal of effort, perseverance, and intellectual discipline, it is an immensely rewarding pursuit. St. Thomas writes in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*[14][14] that "among all human pursuits the pursuit

[12][12] St. Thomas Aquinas defines wisdom in general terms as "a certain knowledge of the deepest causes of all things"(*In Metaphys*. I, 2).
[13][13] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2, c.
[14][14] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 1. It should be remembered that philosophy is, of course, human or natural wisdom which is inferior to sacred theology (the superior science) which is wisdom in the fullest sense. Natural

of wisdom is more perfect, more noble, more useful, and more full of joy. It is more perfect because, insofar as a man gives himself to the pursuit of wisdom, so far does he even now have some share in true beatitude. And so a wise man has said: 'Blessed is the man that shall continue in wisdom.'[15][15] It is more noble because through this pursuit man especially approaches to a likeness to God who 'made all things in wisdom.'[16][16] And since likeness is the cause of love, the pursuit of wisdom especially joins man to God in friendship. That is why it is said of wisdom that 'she is an infinite treasure to men! which they that use become the friends of God.'[17][17] It is more useful because through wisdom we arrive at the kingdom of immortality. For 'the desire of wisdom bringeth to the everlasting kingdom.'[18][18] It is more full of joy because 'her conversation hath no bitterness, nor her company any tediousness, but joy and gladness.'"[19][19]

1.2. Philosophy and the Particular Sciences

Philosophy, as was already mentioned, is the universal science, supreme among all human sciences, which studies the ultimate causes and first principles of all reality. On the other hand, the particular sciences (i.e. biology, geology, botany etc.) restrict their material objects to certain determinate fields of reality and study the proximate or secondary causes of their determinate fields. The special or particular sciences study their determinate fields of reality utilizing their respective non-philosophical methods and perspectives. In this case they are autonomous and do not depend upon philosophy. However, the particular sciences are founded upon metaphysics, for they must implicitly rely upon certain philosophical notions of reality presupposed in their special spheres of inquiry. And to explicitly reflect upon these notions, these basic and fundamental principles of reality itself, is properly a philosophical endeavor. The special science physics, for example, starts from basic notions such as bodies, space and time, and utilizes basic principles such as physical causality, all of which are studied by philosophy. And the more sublime the object of a particular science (as in the case of biology or medicine with respect to, say, chemistry or geology) the closer will its link with philosophy be. Biology for example, because it studies living beings, will be closer to metaphysics than the

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wisdom (which deals with reason alone) is wisdom of a lower level in contrast to supernatural wisdom which pertains to reason illumined by faith.

[15][15] *Ecclesiasticus*, 14: 22.

[16][16] *Psalm*, 103: 24.

[17][17] *Wisdom*, 7: 14.

[18][18] *Wisdom*, 6: 21.

[19][19] *Wisdom*, 7: 16.

study of rocks and minerals. Its metaphysical relevance is greater. Particular sciences like sociology, anthropology, and history (which study man), necessarily make use of philosophical knowledge to a greater extent than, say, biology (which studies living things in general). And because of their higher degree of reliance on metaphysical principles, the conclusions of these particular sciences which study man greatly depend upon a solid metaphysical foundation.

As was said the particular sciences have their own autonomy as regards their particular non-philosophical methods and perspectives, scientific judgments and conclusions. With regard to them, philosophy's task is one of judging and guiding, in a manner that respects their own proper autonomy. Philosophy does not interfere with them in their own respective fields, for its role of judge and guide of all the other sciences is exercised from a higher level. Since, as was said, the particular sciences are founded in varying degrees upon metaphysics since they too must rely on basic self-evident principles and metaphysical notions (being, time, space, causality, etc.) of which philosophy properly studies, all the sciences may be said to be indirectly subordinated to metaphysics. The laws of one science are subordinated to the laws of a superior science and it belongs to the superior science to govern the inferior. Since the principles of metaphysics are the absolutely first principles of human knowledge, they have an authority over the other principles of all the other human sciences, which depend upon the basic principles of metaphysics. Metaphysics governs the other sciences, not despotically, but in a manner of government which can be described as constitutional, respecting the proper autonomy of the particular sciences (their proper methods, perspectives, scientific judgments and conclusions). The principles of the particular sciences, therefore, are subordinated to the principles of philosophy, but only in an indirect way.

How does philosophy judge and guide the particular sciences? It judges them by specifying the first principles of all human knowledge and the value of scientific methods, determining the proper object of every science, determining their specific nature and properly classifying them according to a hierarchy. To direct and guide a thing is to prescribe its proper object or end. Now, the particular sciences are not directed by philosophy to their end in the sense that they are unable to attain it without the assistance of the latter. They can indeed arrive at their respective scientific judgments and conclusions without its help. What philosophy does is that it assigns the distinctive ends of each and every particular science in the sense that it determines in a speculative way the

distinctive object of each, determining its specific unity as a science and its specific difference from the rest of the other sciences. Since wisdom's task is to properly order things according to their proper ends and ultimately, to their Ultimate Last End, so philosophy orders the particular sciences, specifying their objects and classifying them in a logical, orderly way.

1.3. Philosophy and Theology

St. Thomas Aquinas writes in his *De Veritate* that "faith does not destroy reason; rather, it goes beyond it and gives fullness or perfection to it."[20][20] And Gilson states that "faith in revelation does not end up destroying the rationality of our knowledge. Rather, it allows it to develop more fully. Just as grace does not destroy nature, but rather heals and perfects it and renders it fruitful, so too, faith, through the influence it exerts from above on reason as such, allows the development of a more fruitful and genuine rational activity."[21][21]

What is faith? First of all, supernatural faith is a gift from God, a supernatural virtue infused in the person by God Himself. "Before this faith can be exercised, man must have the grace of God to move and assist him; he must have the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth.'"[22][22] Though supernatural faith is a gift from God it is also an authentically human act contrary neither to human freedom nor to human reason. In supernatural faith both the human intellect and will cooperate with God's grace, believing being an act of the intellect assenting to God's truth by command of the will moved by God through grace.

Faith is "a supernatural virtue by which, we, inspired and helped by God's grace, believe as true what God has revealed, not because of the intrinsic truth of things perceived by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself revealing them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived."[23][23] It has God as its object, and has Him as its sole end. "If we consider, in faith, the formal aspect of the object, it is nothing else than the First Truth. For the faith of which we are speaking does not assent to anything except because it is revealed by God. Hence faith is based on the Divine Truth itself, as on the means. If, however, we consider materially the things to which faith assents,

[20][20] *De Veritate*, q. 14, a. 10, ad 9.
[21][21] E. GILSON, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Dorset Press, New York, 1980, p. 44.
[22][22] VATICAN II, *Dei Verbum*, 5 ; cf. DS 377, 3010.
[23][23] VATICAN I, Dogmatic Constitution *De fide catholica*, 3.

they include not only God, but also many other things, which, nevertheless, do not come under the assent of faith except as bearing some relation to God, in so far as, namely, through certain effects of the Divine operation, man is helped on his journey towards the enjoyment of God. Consequently from this point of view also the object of faith is, in a way, the First Truth, since nothing comes under faith except in relation to God, even as the object of the medical art is health, for it considers nothing except in relation to health."[24][24]

There are various motives of credibility (*motiva credibilitatis*) that show that the assent of faith is not a blind impulse of the human mind: "So 'that the submission of our faith might nevertheless be in accordance with reason, God willed that external proofs of His revelation should be joined to the internal helps of the Holy Spirit.'[25][25] Thus the miracles of Christ and the saints, prophecies, the Church's growth and holiness, and her fruitfulness and stability 'are the most certain signs of divine Revelation, adapted to the intelligence of all.'[26][26]"[27][27]

With regard to reason, it is the evidence of the object itself which alone moves the intellect. On the other hand, as regards the act of faith, an act of will moving the intellect to give its assent is required. In an act of faith the intellect assents, not because it sees the truth to which it assents, either in itself or as reduced to other truths already known, but because the will commands it to assent. "Faith signifies the assent of the intellect to that which is believed. Now the intellect assents to a thing in two ways. First, through being moved to assent by its very object, which is known either by itself (as in the case of first principles, which are held by the habit of understanding), or through something else already known (as in the case of conclusions, which are held by the habit of science). Secondly, the intellect assents to something, not through being sufficiently moved to this assent by its proper object, but through an act of choice, whereby it turns voluntarily to one side rather than to the other. Now if this be accompanied by doubt and fear of the opposite side, there will be opinion; while, if there be certainty and no fear of the other side, there will be faith. Now those things are said to be seen which, of themselves, move the intellect or the senses to knowledge of them. Therefore it is evident that neither faith nor opinion can be of things seen either by the senses or by the intellect."[28][28]

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[24][24] *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 1, a. 1, c.
[25][25] VATICAN I, *Dei Filius*, 3.
[26][26] *Ibid.*
[27][27] CCC, 156.
[28][28] *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 1, a. 4, c.

Faith is most certain by reason of its formal object, which is the authority of the God Himself, the source of Revelation, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, and because the will commands the intellect to assent precisely under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Faith "is more certain than all human knowledge because it is founded on the very word of God who cannot lie. To be sure, revealed truths can seem obscure to human reason and experience, but 'the certainty that the divine light gives is greater than that which the light of natural reason gives.'[29][29],,[30][30] Alejandro Llano explains that "by faith we believe in the first Truth Himself, who is infallible, and therefore faith is more firm than the light of the human intellect. Faith, then involves a greater certainty – in terms of the firmness of the assent – than the certainty of science or of the first principles, even though the evidence for faith is less.[31][31] Therefore, the believer assents to the truths of faith with greater firmness, even, than to the first principles of reason.[32][32] This intimate security with which a man of faith adheres to truths which are not rationally evident is the paradox of an *obscure clarity*, which can hardly be glimpsed by anyone not disposed to accept the gift of a certitude which elevates him beyond himself."[33][33]

We have spoken about faith, but what is theology (supernatural or sacred theology)? In brief, theology is the science of the faith. It is the divine science which deals with God and of creatures in so far as they refer to Him, in the light of Divine Revelation. It is the supreme science that studies all reality in the light of Divine Revelation, from the perspective of the supernatural light of faith. This supernatural wisdom is wisdom in the fullest sense. It is the supreme judge and guide of all the other branches of knowledge, without making these branches lose their own autonomy.

What is the relationship between reason and faith, between philosophy and theology? There is neither a hostility nor an estraneousness between these spheres of knowledge but rather a profound harmony. Therefore, there can be no conflict between the two forms of knowledge in as much as faith consolidates, integrates, and enriches the panorama of truth already accessible to human reason. Faith and reason are two forms of knowledge that come from the same source: God. "Though faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason. Since the same God who reveals

[29][29] *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 171, a. 5.
[30][30] CCC, 157.
[31][31] Cf. *In III Sent*., d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 3.
[32][32] Cf. *In Sent*., Prol., q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3.
[33][33] A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, 2001, p. 55.

mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, God cannot deny himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth."[34][34] "Consequently, methodical research in all branches of knowledge, provided it is carried out in a truly scientific manner and does not override moral laws, can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God. The humble and persevering investigator of the secrets of nature is being led, as it were, by the hand of God in spite of himself, for it is God, the conserver of all things, who made them what they are."[35][35] Both work for the same objective: the possession of the truth. But faith and reason are distinct, having two different gnoseological procedures: reason grasps a truth by reason of its mediate or immediate intrinsic evidence, while faith accepts a truth based upon the authority of the Word of God.

There are two levels of truth regarding God, or two possible ways of manifesting the truths regarding God: 1. there are certain truths that surpass the capacities of human reason, as, for example, the Holy Trinity of God ; and 2. there are other truths concerning God that can be attained by the sole force of human reason, as is the case with the truth of the existence of God, and truths like the fact that God is One, Absolutely Simple, and Supremely Perfect. Now, the first order of truths fall within the domain of sacred theology, while the second order of truths regarding God are philosophically explained in the supreme branch of metaphysics called philosophy of God or natural theology.

Philosophy is the highest human science among all the sciences attained solely through the powers of natural reason. But, as has been said, there is a superior science which is sacred theology wherein man participates in the knowledge proper to God Himself. Now the premises of theology are the truths formally revealed by God. These truths are called dogmas or articles of faith. The primary criterion of truth is the authority of God who reveals these truths to be believed. Theology's illuminating light is no longer the natural light of human reason but rather the light of reason illumined by faith. Theology reigns supreme above all the human sciences by reason of the sublimity of its object, the certainty of its premises, and by the penetrating superiority of its light.

As the king of the sciences, theology (the divine science) judges philosophy in the same sense that philosophy, the supreme human science, judges and governs the particular sciences: its government is by negative rule. Philosophy is subject to theology, neither in its premises nor in its method, but

[34][34] VATICAN I, *Dei Filius*, 4 (DS 3017).
[35][35] VATICAN II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 36, section 1.

in its conclusions, over which theology exercises a control, thereby constituting itself a negative rule of philosophy. Theology's negative government over philosophy consists in rejecting as erroneous any philosophical affirmation which contradicts a theological truth.

How does philosophy help theology? The former helps the latter by: 1. demonstrating the *praeambula fidei* (the preambles to faith) which serve as a basis for revealed supernatural truths. They include the existence of God, the spirituality and immortality of the human soul, human freedom, and the natural law ; 2. by explaining through analogies, the truths of the faith; and 3. by confuting the errors against the faith as is the case in apologetics.

Theology can likewise come to the assistance of philosophy as faith aids greatly in the very perfecting of human reason by guiding it in the paths of truth, preserving it from the manifold errors due to the weakness of human nature wounded by original sin, and its wallowing in vices which obscure and even blind reason from attaining natural truths. Inasmuch as philosophy is subject to the external control and negative government of sacred theology, it is protected from many false and erroneous positions, and thus its freedom to err is restricted, and its freedom to reach the truths which are discoverable by human reason is correspondingly safeguarded. Instead of doing violence to reason, supernatural faith protects and perfects it.

The human creature is limited and finite and God infinitely transcends him and his human powers, He being the Supremely Perfect, All-Knowing, Omnipotent Being, Creator of all that is. God created man for a destiny far surpassing the capabilities of his limited human nature, and from the very beginning (with the entrance of original sin in the world because of the pride and disobedience of first man), his greatest obstacle to this sublime destiny has been his pride and presumption concerning his own powers. From almost the very beginning, man sought to attain happiness on his own, transgressing the Eternal Law of God by sin. He aspired to become the final arbiter of good and evil. It is an immense error and presumption for man to think that, with his finite and limited intellect, he would be able to comprehend the very nature of God, to grasp His very Essence, and usurp His Eternal Law. Now, faith protects reason from falling into pride and presumption. And aside from protecting reason from these sins, it crowns and perfects it by giving it a special knowledge of those manifold sublime truths for which man's philosophical inquiries have created so great a thirst for, such as the truths regarding the

spirituality and immortality of the human soul, the truth about the human person, and the profound truths regarding the attributes and perfections of God.

If the existence of God can be rationally demonstrated by the sole light of human reason alone, why then has this truth regarding God (as well as other divine truths attainable by human reason such as His Oneness, Supreme Perfection, etc.) been revealed by God to be believed by faith? Isn't reason sufficient enough with regard to these truths? Why can't all men follow the path of philosophical reason regarding these truths? St. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Commentary on the "Trinity" of Boethius*, presents five good reasons why it is fitting that the truths about God to which natural reason can attain be proposed to men for belief. He takes these reasons from the Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides: "First, even though these truths are attainable by the light of natural reason, they are deep, subtle, and the reasonings required to establish them are difficult and not within the capacity of all men. Therefore, lest any man be without some knowledge of them, they are revealed so that all may hold them by faith at least. Second, no one can attain these truths by reason until he is mature; whereas some knowledge of them is required at all times. Third, the rational knowledge of God is the highest knowledge that human reason can attain, and much knowledge of natural things must precede it. Even this preliminary knowledge is never acquired by a great number of persons; yet all are required to know about God. Hence, revelation of these truths is necessary. Fourth, many men are not so fitted with intellectual gifts as to be able to attain rational knowledge of God. And, finally, most men are too occupied with the affairs of life in this world even to pursue the studies necessary to know God through reason."[36][36]

Is there such a thing as Christian philosophy? Yes, just like there is such a thing as an Islamic philosophy, a Jewish philosophy, an Indian philosophy, and a Chinese philosophy. What exactly is Christian philosophy? Gilson states: "I call Christian, every philosophy which, although keeping the two orders formally distinct, nevertheless considers the Christian revelation as an indispensable auxiliary to reason."[37][37] In his later *Elements of Christian Philosophy*, he writes that "Christian philosophy is that way of philosophizing in which the Christian faith and the human intellect join forces in a common investigation of philosophical truth."[38][38] For Pope John Paul II, writing in his 1998 Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, Christian philosophy refers to "a Christian way

[36][36] *In Boet. De Trinitate*, III, 1, c.
[37][37] E. GILSON, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, Scribner's, New York, 1936, p. 37.
[38][38] E. GILSON, *Elements of Christian Philosophy*, Mentor-Omega, New York, 1960, p. 5.

of philosophizing, a philosophical speculation conceived in dynamic union with faith. It does not therefore refer simply to a philosophy developed by Christian philosophers who have striven in their research not to contradict the faith. The term Christian philosophy includes those important developments of philosophical thinking which would not have happened without the direct or indirect contribution of Christian faith."[39][39]

[39][39] JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et Ratio*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, p. 110. The Holy Father also writes: "Christian philosophy therefore has two aspects. The first is subjective, in the sense that faith purifies reason. As a theological virtue, faith liberates reason from presumption, the typical temptation of the philosopher. Saint Paul, the Fathers of the Church and, closer to our own time, philosophers such as Pascal and Kierkegaard reproached such presumption. The philosopher who learns humility will also find courage to tackle questions which are difficult to resolve if the data of Revelation are ignored – for example, the problem of evil and suffering, the personal nature of God and the question of the meaning of life or, more directly, the radical metaphysical question, 'Why is there something rather than nothing.'

"The second aspect of Christian philosophy is objective, in the sense that it concerns content. Revelation clearly proposes certain truths which might never have been discovered by reason unaided, although they are not of themselves inaccessible to reason. Among these truths is the notion of a free and personal God who is the Creator of the world, a truth which has been so crucial for the development of philosophical thinking, especially the philosophy of being. There is also the reality of sin, as it appears in the light of faith, which helps to shape an adequate philosophical formulation of the problem of evil. The notion of the person as a spiritual being is another of faith's specific contributions: the Christian proclamation of human dignity, equality and freedom has undoubtedly influenced modern philosophical thought. In more recent times, there has been the discovery that history as event – so central to Christian Revelation – is important for philosophy as well. It is no accident that this has become pivotal for a philosophy of history which stakes its claim as a new chapter in the human search for truth"(JOHN PAUL II, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112).

CHAPTER 2

PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE
(PHILOSOPHY OF INANIMATE NATURE)

2.1. Philosophy of Nature Defined

Philosophy of nature (in the broad sense referring to both inanimate and animate nature) is defined as *the study of the ultimate causes and first principles of the natural world*. It is the science of nature, the discipline that treats of the world of nature or the physical universe in its most general aspects. The material object of philosophy of nature (in the general sense) is the entirety of material bodies, that is, the totality of beings that constitute the physical universe, accessible to human sensible knowledge in a direct way or by means of technical instruments. The formal object of philosophy of nature (in the general sense) is: corporeal beings in their ultimate causes and first principles. Philosophy of nature deals with mobile or changeable being as natural corporeal beings are characterized by their capacity for change for matter is always in potency to acquire new forms. It is by their changeable character that things in the physical world first come to be understood. Corporeal beings are initially known by their behavior, their reactions, their growth and other such activities and characteristics. Philosophy of nature studies corporeal, material beings from a metaphysical perspective. "For example, it looks into the composition of material substances with regard to their being, that is, their structure in different ontological levels, such as matter and form, substance and accidents, and essence and act of being ; it studies the accidents that affect them, such as quantity, and corporeal qualities ; it seeks their deepest causes, and thus prepares the metaphysical ascent to God. Hence, it differs from metaphysics because it limits itself to the study of material reality."[40][40] Philosophy of nature (in the general sense) is divided into two main parts: philosophy of inanimate nature (or cosmology) and the philosophy of animate nature (philosophical psychology). The *material object* of philosophy of inanimate nature is: *inanimate corporeal beings*. Its *formal object* is: *inanimate corporeal beings studied from the philosophical point of view* (or inanimate corporeal beings in their ultimate causes and first principles). Philosophy of inanimate nature is therefore defined as the *science of inanimate corporeal beings in their ultimate causes and first principles*.

[40][40] M. ARTIGAS, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, 1990, p. 53.

2.2. The Relationship Between Philosophy of Inanimate Nature, Psychology and Philosophical Anthropology

Plants, animals, and human beings certainly make up part of the corporeal universe and are therefore in some way included in the object of philosophy of nature. Nevertheless, the name of philosophy of nature is normally reserved for the philosophical study of inanimate nature (commonly called cosmology). Psychology and philosophical anthropology deal with the philosophical study of living things and the latter, specifically with man. Philosophy of nature in the strict sense (cosmology) naturally precedes psychology or the philosophical study of living things in both a logical and a gnoseological way: 1. in a logical way because living things are also physical beings, and to this inorganic physical structure are added the diverse grades of vital perfections. It is logical to start one's philosophical study of nature with a more simple reality (inanimate things) so that one deals with the inferior structures of all corporeal beings without a need to repeat this philosophical analysis later on in the study of animate nature and man. Also to be considered here is the fact that the spirituality of the human soul entails an independence with respect to matter, an absolute immateriality, and therefore presupposes a knowledge of what matter is and what the properties are that imply a transcendence with respect to it. So, philosophy of inanimate nature should come before psychology and philosophical anthropology in our philosophical studies in order to distinguish material beings from immaterial ones; and 2. in a gnoseological way because man is naturally inclined to first know sensible extra-mental things and only later does he know immaterial realities.

2.3. The Relationship Between Philosophy of Inanimate Nature and Metaphysics

From the logical point of view philosophy of inanimate nature depends on metaphysics because in order to determine the meaning of corporeal or material being one would need first to understand the meaning of being itself. However, considering our imperfect and analogical way of knowing being which concludes to that which is most profound, starting from sensible extra-mental things, cosmology must logically precede metaphysics, and for this motive must be studied first. Philosophy of inanimate nature is therefore propaedeutic to metaphysics. Studying nature we discover the universal structure of corporeal beings: the act-potency synthesis, the substance-accident synthesis, and the activity of the various causes and their influence upon the being of corporeal

things. The more we study corporeal nature the more we open the way for the philosophical study of being as such, that is, we ascend to the level of metaphysics which transcends the limits of changeable being. Philosophy of inanimate nature, therefore, offers a solid foundation for metaphysical knowledge.

2.4. The Relationship Between Philosophy of Inanimate Nature and Philosophy of God

Cosmology prepares the way for philosophy of God (which is the science of God from the point of view of unaided human reason). Our philosophical study of inanimate nature leads us to the discovery of certain characteristics like mutability, contingency, finality, which imply the existence of an Immutable, Necessary, and Intelligent First Cause. Cosmology prepares the way for the so-called cosmological *a posteriori* demonstrations or proofs for the existence of God.

2.5. Matter and Form

Every corporeal substance is a hylemorphic composite of matter (hyle) and form (morphe),[41][41] that is, every complete material substance is a composite of two essential intrinsic principles, one a principle of potentiality (prime matter), and the other a principle of actuality (substantial form). Every corporeal substance is a single individual thing compounded of two essential intrinsic principles, namely, prime matter and substantial form. In a material substance prime matter is potential, passive and the determinable. It is what is passive and receptive to the form. Because of prime matter, the body can be acted upon, moved, changed, divided, and corrupted. Substantial form, on the other hand, is act, that which determines, and that which is active. Because of this, the body is able to maintain its own particular identity, possesses it own properties, causes changes in other bodies, acts, and makes itself known. Because of the form a

[41][41] For in-depth studies regarding matter and form and material and formal causality, see: I. HUSIK, *Matter and Form in Aristotle*, Berlin, 1912 ; P. DESCOQS, *Essai critique su l'hylémorphisme*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1924 ; J. A. McWILLIAMS, *Peripatetic Matter and Form*, "Thought," 1 (1926), pp. 237-246 ; B. GERRITY, *The Relations Between Matter and Form and the Theory of Knowledge*, Catholic University Press, Washington, D. C., 1936 ; J. GOHEEN, *The Problem of Matter and Form in 'De Ente et Essentia,' of Thomas Aquinas*, Cambridge, Mass., 1940 ; ROO, VAN, W. A., *Matter as a Principle of Being*, "The Modern Schoolman," 19 (1942), pp. 47-50 ; J. PETERS, *Matter and Form in Metaphysics*, "The New Scholasticism", 31 (1957), pp. 447-483 ; L. CENCILLO, *Hylé. La materia en el corpus aristotelicum*, CSIC, Madrid, 1958 ; R. MASI, *Le prove dell'ilemorfismo e il loro significato metafisico*, "Aquinas," 2 (1959), pp. 60-94 ; E. RÜPPEL, *Vom Sinn des Hylemorphismus*, "Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie," 21 (1974), pp. 291-303 ; J. E. BOLZÁN, *Hilemorfismo y corporalidad*, "Sapientia", 40 (1985), pp. 25-32.

body is of a certain nature and belongs to a particular species. Because of matter the body is an individual embodiment of this nature, an individual member of this species (matter is the principle of individuation). Twenty red apples have the same form but are twenty individual bodies of apple because of the matter. Matter and form are the intrinsic causes of corporeal substances. Matter receives the form (which is first act) and embodies it in concrete being, while form actualizes the matter and determines it to a specific nature.

CHAPTER 3

PHILOSOPHICAL PSYCHOLOGY (PHILOSOPHY OF ANIMATE NATURE)

3.1. Definition of Philosophical Psychology

Psychology means literally the study of the soul (*psyche*). It is also called the philosophy of living beings or the philosophy of animate nature. The *material object* of the philosophy of animate nature is: *animate* (living) *corporeal beings*. The *formal object* of the philosophy of animate nature is: *animate corporeal beings studied from the philosophical point of view* (or animate corporeal beings in their ultimate causes and first principles). Philosophy of animate nature is thus defined as the *science of animate corporeal beings in their ultimate causes and first principles*. Our discipline had been called psychology in the past but it is better to call it philosophical psychology in order to distinguish it from scientific or experimental psychology (usually just called psychology these days) which analyzes mental phenomena, classifies them and determines their proximate causes. In contrast to experimental psychology, part of philosophical psychology's goal is to seek to penetrate beyond the surface of mental phenomena to the ultimate reasons, principles, and causes, so as to uncover the nature which gives rise to such phenomena. A part of the philosophy of living beings is the philosophy of man (philosophical anthropology). The *material object* of philosophical anthropology is *man*. Its *formal object* is *man studied from the philosophical point of view* (or man in his ultimate causes and first principles). Philosophical anthropology is therefore defined as the *science of man in his ultimate causes and first principles*.

3.2. The Difference Between Psychology, Biology, and Physiology

Biology deals with life in general as found in all organisms whereas psychology treats mainly of the 'mental' life of organisms, particularly of man. Physiology studies the functions of life present in the organs, tissues, and cells of living beings, exclusive of mental functions, while psychology studies the mental life of organisms, physiological matters being brought into discussion only incidentally.

3.3. The Difference Between Psychology, Logic, Gnoseology, and Ethics

Logic examines the intellectual activities of the human mind from the standpoint of correct thinking while psychology (philosophical anthropology in particular) studies the entire field of human mental states and activities, including sensation, perception, emotion, intellection, and volition. Gnoseology or philosophy of knowledge is concerned with the validity or truth-value of human knowledge, while psychology investigates the nature of the human mind and its various operations. Ethics or moral philosophy examines the morality (the rightness or wrongness) of human actions (human acts and not acts of man), while psychology examines human action in all its manifestations of mental life.

3.4. Life

What is life? What essentially differentiates living beings from non-living beings? Experience reveals that living beings are endowed with a certain interiority that, by their own initiative or power, are able to move themselves, something which a non-living being, say a rock, is unable to accomplish. Such an observation leads us to affirm that what is distinctive of the living being is the power to move itself by itself; a non-living being moves only if it is moved by another. When we speak of "movement" or "being moved" here, we refer to movement in the general or wide sense which includes every kind of change and local movement. St. Thomas Aquinas writes that "life is essentially that by which a thing is able to move itself, taking the word 'movement' in a wide sense, so that even the operation of the intellect can be called 'movement.' For, those things that can be moved only by an exterior principle are said to be without life."[42][42] A living being is one that can move itself, that is, one that has within itself the efficient principle of its activity, responding in an original and assimilative manner to its environment and extra-subjective objects on which it depends. By its own initiative and power the living being transforms what it receives from outside it. Irritability, or the power of responding to external stimuli, therefore, is characteristic of life. Living beings are also characterized by the power of growth, taking in material from its environment and reorganizing it according to the structure of an organic substance. Living beings also have the power to reproduce themselves according to their individual

[42][42] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 18, a. 1.

species. When we say that living beings move themselves we refer essentially to their movements of growth, reproduction and irritability.

Living beings have the power of self-perfecting movement. When we say that a living being moves itself we mean that it is of itself equipped to do something by way of connatural operation or function. Such a power of self-movement is not extrinsic but innate in the living being; it is an intrinsic force or power. When we say "self-perfecting movement" we mean that a living being's powers are exercised *by* the living being, *in* the living being, and *for* the living being, and so are said to *perfect* the living being.

When we say that a living being is capable of self-movement we mean that it is naturally equipped with a power, which intimately resides within itself and to be exercised through itself, whereby it does something for itself. To say that a living being "moves" is a general term for the exercise of such a power. The living being's activities are its own, exercised by means of powers with which it is natively equipped, and which function in it, and by it, and for it, and are thus called, in their functioning, self-movements.

Living beings are the objects and terms of their own activity. Non-living corporeal bodies in contrast only act upon and transform things exterior to themselves. A living being, in contrast, acts for its own advantage, seeking both to sustain its own being and to acquire full development. The activity of living beings, in some manner and measure, remains within themselves, so that we can designate them as having a certain degree of immanence or interiority, which admits of varying degrees, from the low level of immanence found in plant life, to the absolutely perfect possession of self, found in the Divine Being.

Immanent action or activity, characteristic of living beings, remains within the living being (the agent), for it originates in the agent, and is finished in the agent, and produces its main activity in the agent. Plants, animals, and human beings, for example, grow and that activity of growth is immanent in them; the main effect is in and on themselves. Growth as such begins in them, and affects them, and as a function ends in them. The growth of living beings is an immanent action. All life actions (vital actions) are immanent actions.

Life, therefore, is defined as *the natural capacity of an agent for self-perfective immanent activity or movement*.

The three levels of life in the corporeal universe, based on both the degree of immateriality in relation to the substantial form of a living being, and on the degree of immanence found in the different operations of life, are the following: vegetative life (plants), sensitive life (animals), and intellectual or rational life (human beings).[43][43] In this hierarchy, the lower degrees are contained in the higher.

The more a living being is capable of acting by itself, the higher it is in the hierarchy of life. With such a principle one can establish a classification according to the lesser or greater degrees of interiority evidenced by the several factors underlying the activities of living beings. The factors involved are either a principal or instrumental form, and the end or term. With this in mind, we are able to distinguish three general kinds of living beings found in nature: plants, animals, and humans.

In plants nature implants both their form and the end of their movement, so that they act as mere instruments of execution in regard to the movement. In animals, while not determining their own end as nature implants this in them, they nevertheless acquire through themselves the forms governing their activities, these forms being the sensible images that cause them to move themselves. Finally, in humans beings, who are endowed with rationality, they themselves are capable of determining their end and acquiring the form that is the principle of their operations.[44][44]

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[43][43] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV, 11 ; *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 18, a. 3 ; *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 78, a. 1 ; *Quaestiones Disputatae De Anima*, a. 13 ; *De Potentia Dei*, q. 3, a. 11 ; *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 1 ; *De Spiritualibus Creaturis*, a. 2.

[44][44] St. Thomas gives us an excellent description from the *Summa Theologiae*: "Since a thing is said to live in so far as it operates of itself and not as moved by another, the more perfectly this power is found in anything, the more perfect is the life of that thing. In things that move and are moved, a threefold order is found. In the first place, the end moves the agent: and the principal agent is that which acts through its form, and sometimes it does so through some instrument that acts by virtue not of its own form, but of the principal agent, and does no more than execute the action. Accordingly there are things that move themselves, not in respect of any form or end naturally inherent in them, but only in respect of the executing of the movement; the form by which they act, and the end of the action being alike determined for them by their nature. Of this kind are plants, which move themselves according to their inherent nature, with regard only to executing the movements of growth and decay. Other things have self-movement in a higher degree, that is, not only with regard to executing the movement, but even as regards to the form, the principle of movement, which form they acquire of themselves. Of this kind are animals, in which the principle of movement is not a naturally implanted form; but one received through sense. Hence the more perfect is their sense, the more perfect is their power of self-movement…Yet although animals of the latter kind receive through sense the form that is the principle of their movement, nevertheless they cannot of themselves propose to themselves the end of their operation, or movement; for this has been implanted in them by nature; and by natural instinct they are moved to any action through the form apprehended by sense. Hence such animals as move themselves in respect to an end they themselves propose are superior to these. This can only be done by reason and intellect; whose province it is to know the proportion between the end and the means to that end, and duly coordinate them. Hence a more perfect degree of life is that of intelligible beings; for their power of self-movement is more perfect. This is shown by the fact that in one

As regards a cat and dog, for example, life is predicated of them in an univocal way. Thus, if I say cat has life and a dog has life, the predicate life, in both instances, is understood univocally, that is, with exactly the same meaning. However, life is predicated *analogously* of creatures and God.

Life, inasmuch as it is a *perfecting*, is predicable of creatures only and not of the Supreme Being who is All Perfect, not undergoing any perfecting whatsoever. Life therefore, is predicable of creatures and God only in a manner that is partly the same and partly different.

Life, defined as *the natural capacity of an agent for self-perfective immanent activity or movement*, refers to the life of creatures, which are limited beings, beings only *having* the act of being, possessing being in limited ways. God is Life, but His life is not self-perfective, since He is the All-Perfect Being, without any potentiality whatsoever; what is All Perfect cannot be perfected. Another difference between God and creatures is that in creatures life-activity is distinct from life-principle (which is the soul). Living creatures are not identical with their vital activities, nor are their souls the same with their operative powers or faculties. In God, however, vital activity is one with the divine essence and substance. Another difference: in creatures, life-activity is caused

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and the same man the intellectual faculty moves the sensitive powers; and these by their command move the organs of movement. Thus in the arts we see that the art of using a ship, i.e. the art of navigation, rules the art of ship-designing; and this in its turn rules the art that is only concerned with preparing the material for the ship. But although our intellect moves itself to some things, yet others are supplied by nature, as are first principles, which it cannot doubt; and the last end, which it cannot but will. Hence, although with respect to some things it moves itself, yet with regard to other things it must be moved by another. Wherefore that being whose act of understanding is its very nature, and which, in what it naturally possesses, is not determined by another, must have life in the most perfect degree. Such is God; and hence in Him principally is life. From this the Philosopher concludes (*Metaph*. xii, 51), after showing God to be intelligent, that God has life most perfect and eternal, since His intellect is most perfect and always in act" For Thomas, rational beings have the highest level of life, but even here we have a distinction of degrees of perfection of rational life ; this will go from the lowest level of rational life – humans – on to a higher level – the angels – until we reach the highest level of rational life, which is God. The Divine Intellect is always in act, is perfectly autonomous (unlike human intellects which are not completely self-determining, as in the case of determination at least by the first principles of the mind), and is therefore at the highest level of rational life. St. Thomas, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, gives us the three levels of rational life: human, angelic, and Divine: "The highest degree of life is that which is accorded to the intellect; for the intellect reflects on itself, and can understand itself. There are, however, various degrees in the intellectual life: because the human mind, though able to know itself, takes its first steps to knowledge from without; for it cannot understand apart from phantasms, as we have already made clear (II, 50). Accordingly, intellectual life is more perfect in the angels whose intellect does not proceed from something extrinsic to acquire self-knowledge, but knows itself by itself. Yet their life does not reach the highest degree of perfection because, though the intelligible species is altogether within them, it is not their very substance, because in them to understand and to be are not the same thing, as we have already shown (II, 52). Therefore, the highest perfection of life belongs to God, whose understanding is not distinct from His being, as we have proved (I, 45). Wherefore the intelligible species in God must be the divine essence itself." (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV, 11).

by the life-principle, which is the soul; in God, however, nothing is caused; the Divine Essence is the *reason* for the infinite life-activity of the Divine Being's understanding and will, but does not *cause* this activity. Lastly, self-movement involves a change in the living creature which exercises it, but in God there is no change whatsoever. He is the Absolutely Immutable Being.

3.5. The Soul

Every living being has within itself a principle which makes vital actions possible. This principle is the soul, the intrinsic principle which makes a body a living body, essentially distinct from non-living ones. The soul, not the body, is the first principle of life, the interior, ultimate principle of vital manifestations of a living being.[45][45]

The soul is the formal cause of the hylemorphic composite of body and soul, and this composite is the source of the physical energy of the living body. A formal cause is defined as an intrinsic act of perfection by which a thing is whatever it is, either in the realm of substance or of accidents.

The soul is not an accident, but a substance, though an incomplete substance that, together with the body, form the complete substance, a hylemorphic composite of body and soul. If the soul were a complete substance its union with the body could not result in an individual substance, but would merely be an accidental unit or aggregate. This is so for a complete substance cannot be at the same time a mere principle of substance; therefore it cannot be united with another substantial principle to constitute together an individual substance, but only with another complete substance. But a complete substance has its own act of being (*esse*). Therefore, the composite of two individual complete substances consists of components having their own acts of being, so that it could be none other than a mere aggregate. But the living being is one substance. We find that this is so since the component parts of a living being act primarily for the good of the whole being of a living thing. Therefore, the soul cannot be a complete substance, but is rather a substantial principle of the body,

[45][45] St. Thomas writes: "It is manifest that not every principle of vital action is a soul, for then the eye would be a soul, as it is a principle of vision; and the same might be applied to the other instruments of the soul: but it is the 'first' principle of life, which we call the soul. Now, though a body may be a principle of life, or to be a living thing, as the heart is a principle of life in an animal, yet nothing corporeal can be the first principle of life. For it is clear that to be a principle of life, or to be a living thing, does not belong to a body as such; since, if that were the case, every body would be a living thing, or a principle of life. Therefore a body is competent to be a living thing or even a principle of life, as 'such' a body. Now that it is actually such a body, it owes to some principle which is called its act. Therefore the soul, which is the first principle of life, is not a body, but the act of a body" (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 75, a. 1).

which is likewise an incomplete substance. Together body and soul form the one complete substance, the hylemorphic composite.

The soul is the substantial form of the living body. It is not the material principle in a living being, for matter is in potency and is therefore a principle of limitation which does not confer perfection ; it is rather the act of the body, the formal principle or substantial form, giving the composite the perfection of life. The soul, because it is a substantial form of a body, is essentially simple, that is, it is without composition of essential parts. The soul, the substantial form of the body, is one of the ultimate component parts of a living composite, complete substance and is therefore itself simple.

As there are very different vital movements in plants, animals, and men, one can distinguish three different types of souls: the vegetative soul (the form of plants), the sensitive soul (the form of animals), and the intellective or rational soul (the form of human beings). The reason for the division into three different souls, says the Angelic Doctor, "lies in the fact that the souls are distinguished according to the different ways in which the vital operations surpass the operations of corporeal things: the bodies, in fact, are inferior to the soul and serve it as matter or as an instrument. There is, therefore, an operation of the soul which so transcends corporeal reality that it does not have the least need of a material organ to express it. And, this is the operation of the *rational soul*. There is another operation of the soul, inferior to the preceding one, which expresses itself through a material organ, although not through a corporeal reality. This is the operation of the *sensitive soul*…The lowest, then, among the operations of the soul is the one which takes place through a corporeal organ and in virtue of certain physical qualities. Still, even it can surpass the operation of material reality, because the movements of the bodies are originated by an extrinsic movement: this is an aspect common to all operations of the soul; because every animated being moves itself in some way. Thus the operation of the *vegetative soul* presents itself."[46][46]

Can we formulate a definition of the soul that can be applicable to all types of souls? Yes. The soul is defined as *the first act of a natural organic body*. Let us explain the parts of this definition first given by the Stagirite.[47][47] The soul is an *act*, that is a perfection of a subject. It is a *first act* (also called an entitative act), the same as the substantial form, which is different from acts like operations, which are called second acts (which are accidents). The soul is the

[46][46] *In De Anima*, II, 4.
[47][47] Cf. ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, book II, chapter 1 (412b 5).

first act of a *body*, for it is through the former that the latter is alive. "Body" in our definition is qualified as natural, in contrast to a machine or mechanical body. Lastly, we have the term organic added to indicate that the soul as the principle of life requires a variety of organs so as to make self-movement possible. An organic body, taken as distinct from its co-principle the soul, is the same as a body which is in immediate potency to life.

3.6. The Powers of the Soul (Operative Potencies)

A faculty is the power of the living being to exercise a specific life-operation. Now, the powers of the soul are different from the soul itself, for the latter belongs to the category of substance (albeit an incomplete one), whereas the former belongs to the category of accident, specifically under the accident quality. The powers of the soul are accidents that belong to the substance. Therefore, the creatures' powers of the soul cannot be one with the soul itself; rather, these faculties are powers that the soul *has*, not being what the soul *is*. It is only in God, the Subsistent Being Himself, that power is identified with substance.

The soul cannot be its own action for actions come and go while the soul remains, it being the substantial form of the body. Also, to be its own action the soul would have to be its own act of being since action is an ultimate act, not ordained to any further act. Therefore, the soul must be in potency with respect to action.

The various faculties are distinguished from one another by their respective operations and by the objects which these operations work on or seek to achieve. For example, the external senses of sight and smell are not one faculty but two distinct faculties since they operate differently and because sight is for perceiving colour while smelling is for sensing odours. But accidental differences of operations do not require distinct faculties to explain them. So, the power to walk, run, to dance about and to kick are not distinct faculties but are rather accidental variations of the one power of locomotion, which is the faculty or power of moving from place to place.

In the vegetative soul of plants we have the vegetative powers of reproduction, growth and nutrition. In the sensitive soul of animals, we not only have the vegetative powers of nutrition, growth, and reproduction (which serve the sentient operations), but also the animal powers of locomotion, appetition (which are divided into the concupiscible and irascible appetites) and knowing

(both the internal and external senses). In the rational or intellective soul of man, we not only find the vegetative powers (which serve the sensitive operations) and the sensitive powers (these, along with the vegetative powers, serve the rational powers), but also the rational powers of intellect and will.

It should be understood that it is not the sense of sight that sees, or the sense of hearing that hears; rather, it is the living suppositum (being in the full sense, with all of its perfections) that acts (that sees and hears, for example). Man is the agent of all his faculties, but his human nature is not the immediate subject of them all. The powers and operations of man are attributed to the soul as their principle, and either to the human soul or to the human composite of body and soul as their subject depending on what kind of power is in question. When we speak of a *subject* of an operation or a power we refer to that being or part of a being which is able to perform the operation and does perform it. Man's soul is the subject of the rational faculties of understanding and willing (for thinking and willing are performed without the use of any corporeal organ, and therefore, the powers of these operations are in the soul, as in their subject), and the soul-body composite of man is the subject of all other human faculties and operations, yet even these faculties and operations are attributed to the soul as their principle since it is by the soul that the composite has the power to perform such operations.[48][48] Man's body alone cannot be the subject of any human faculty, for the body alone lacks life and all vital operations.

The immediate principles by means of which the suppositum acts are its operative powers or faculties since no finite being is immediately operative, its nature being unable to be the direct principle of action but is merely the remote principle by which the suppositum acts. Therefore, strictly speaking, it is not the intellect that understands or the will that wills; rather, it is the human person that understands and wills by means of his operative powers of intellect and will. There is an utter dependence of all operative powers upon the suppositum, which is the sole independently existing and operating subject.

3.7. Knowledge

Knowing is always someone knowing something. It involves a relationship between a knower and a thing known. It is an act which joins a mind with an object in a relationship which is unique and incomparable with any other. There

[48][48] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 77, a. 5, ad 1.

is no such thing as knowledge without something known and someone knowing it. Each and every act of knowing is a synthesis of object and subject.

Purely physical beings don't know. A rock doesn't know. A glass doesn't know. A glass receives another being, water for example, in the most superficial manner. Any more intimate communication would mean a loss of identity, a becoming something else. Fire united with wood produces something new: ashes. A substantial change has occured. The union of hydrogen and oxygen results in a third thing: water.

Why does a man know while a rock does not? It is because a rock has only its own form while a man is capable of receiving the form of the rock and countless other beings in the universe in an immaterial way. When a man receives the form of the rock in the knowing process the change involved in this knowing is immaterial, not substantial, like when an apple is changed into my flesh when I eat it or when fire reduces a piece of wood into ashes. The change brought about in my knowing the rock is not something physical or material but immaterial. The rock that I know does not change its being and my flesh does not turn into stone when I think of it for the stone is not transferred into my mind in a material way. The rock exists in me in an immaterial manner. The rock that I know is one whole thing that really exists in the world whether I think of it or not. The real object - which here is the rock – is but one, while its intentional presence is multiplied according to the number of knowers. If five hundred persons know a single rock, its intentional presence in the minds of these five hundred persons is five hundred.

Immateriality is at the basis of knowledge. Nothing can be known unless it has in itself something not matter which it can give to the knower (in the case of our rock it is its form). And nothing is capable of knowing unless it has within itself something not matter which can receive the nature of another thing without losing its own. Therefore, the condition both of knowledge and of knowability is some degree of immateriality. My knowledge of rocks is something I can communicate to a classroom full of students. But I do not lose this knowledge by communicating it to say a hundred students.

In knowledge the object gives its forms to the subject without losing these forms. Form is communicable; matter is not. In knowledge I receive the form of things in an immaterial way. Now, what exactly is this form we are referring to? There is something immaterial in every actual being, even in every material being such as our rock. This something is the form, or rather, the forms -

substantial and accidental. Every corporeal substance is a hylemorphic composite, that is, an essential composite of primary matter and a substantial form and is determined in many ways by accidental forms. Hylemorphism, as was mentioned earlier, is the theory of matter (*hyle*) and form (*morphe*). It states that every natural substance, that is, every complete material substance, is a composite of two essential intrinsic principles, one a principle of potentiality, viz., primary matter, and the other a principle of actuality, viz., substantial form. All the things around us, all corporeal substances, are composites of matter and form. Form is that which makes a thing what it is, giving them their basic way of being : manness, catness, whaleness, and so on. But manness does not exist by itself. Individual men exist: Paul, Billy, Edward, Bobby exist. Likewise catness does not exist by itself but only individual cats – that cat down the street, that brown cat on the top of the roof, that black cat crossing the highway, etc. Form alone, then, is not enough to explain the actually existing men, cats, and whales in our world. There must be something else in things, something which limits them, which ties them down to this particular way of being and not any other, to this particular time and place, to this quantity. There must, in short be another principle in things, a principle of limitation, a principle which limits form, restricts it in a way, making it individual, quantified, existing in a definite time and place. This principle is matter.

Now in the act of knowing, which is a psychic act, we cannot get the matter of things into our mind but we can get their forms in. And it is by these forms of other things in us that we know these things. Let us go back to our rock. This rock is a corporeal being – a thing composed of matter and form. Looking at this rock I then know that this is a rock, receiving its form into the cognitive power of my mind apart from its matter (which is the principle of individuation). I received the form of the rock in an immaterial way through a psychic act.

This form in the cognitive power of the knowing subject is called the *intentional species*. This species is an actuation of the cognitive power of the knowing subject. The species is not that which we know but rather is that *by which* we know the thing that really exists. Knowledge is produced thanks to the actuation of the intentional species in the cognitive power of the knower. Species here does not signify a logical principle which determines predicational existence, nor does it signify an ontological principle which determines natural existence; rather, it is a gnoseological principle which determines intentional existence. So, in its cognitive meaning, a species is an intentional form. As an intentional form it is an instrument of knowledge.

Now, if knowledge is a relationship between the knower and the thing known, and that one knows by an impression of the form of the thing in the cognitive power of the knower, which is called the impressed species, what is the formal object of one's intelligence? It is being (*ens*). The first thing that falls under the grasp of the intelligence is being (*ens*) because the comprehension of any type of thing involves a preceding comprehension of its character as being (*ens*). The complex concept of being (*ens*) is the first idea formed by the human mind, which is not innate but proceeding from experience, in which man notices being as soon as he intellectually knows. One does not therefore treat of an explicitly abstract idea (which emerges later as the result of a greater elaboration), but rather of the fact that anything that is the object of some comprehension is first grasped under the character of being (*ens*).

3.8. The Process of Knowledge

Man is a rational being with the operative faculties of intellect and will; he does not merely sense and imagine, he also has the power of abstraction. His ideas or concepts are not the actual products of sense though they are initially derived from sensory data through the instrumentality of the intellect. The object of the senses is a sensible and the object of the intellect is an intelligible. The medium of both sensible and intellective knowledge is what is called a species. An image is a species of a sensible order of being, and an idea or concept is a species of an intelligible order of being. An idea is not an image of a superior sort; to identify them would be to fall into the error of sensism of which Humean empiricism is a pre-eminent example.

We shall now describe the important process of the birth of the idea (idea being the intellectual representation of a thing). First, let us give a purely descriptive account of the knowledge process, and later, an explanatory account. First the descriptive. We form ideas in our minds only after having perceived things, and in forming these ideas we are governed by the perceived aspect of things. What is the process of human cognition from sensitive knowledge to intellective knowledge? The following: 1. The human person, an hylemorphic composite of body and soul, endowed with the operative faculties of intellect and will, is affected in his various sense organs by extra-mental bodies, things, perceiving through his power of external sense these extramental bodies or things and their corresponding sensible determinations ; 2. He then forms, by his internal senses, sensible representations (i.e., phantasms) of these bodies with their qualities, operations, etc. 3. Finally, by his intellectual power,

he grasps in and through these sensible representations the essence or quiddity of the extra-mental things and their corresponding qualities, operations, etc., expressing these essences by way of wholely immaterial, universal representations called ideas or concepts.

Sense knowledge. Before dealing with sense knowledge, we must first of all determine what sense, sensation, and perception are. A *sense* is a specialized function by virtue of which an animal organism is receptive and responsive to a particular class of physical stimuli, resulting in knowledge. A *sensation* is a conscious experience aroused by the stimulation of an organ of sense. Lastly, *perception* is the cognizing of the object which produces the sensation.

External Senses. All man's knowledge begins with sense knowledge gotten initially by means of the external senses. These senses are called external, not so much because their receptory organs are close to the external surface of the body but rather because these senses directly reach extra-mental reality. These external senses are five in number: touch (or the somesthetic sense), smell, taste, hearing, sight, and hearing. 1. *Touch*. Touch is a generic name for several more or less distinct species of senses involving somesthetic or bodily contact and an object. One can distinguish between sensations of warmth, cold, pressure, and pain ; 2. *Smell*. Smell's organ is the nose or rather the olfactory bulbs in the mucous membrane of the nose. Its object is odour. The sensation of odour is aroused when our external sense of smell comes into contact with particles of "odorous" substances suspended in air or gas ; 3. *Taste*. The organs of taste are the tongue and certain parts of the palate and throat, or more specifically, the taste buds on these parts of the body. The object of taste is flavor, which is divided into four kinds: sour, sweet, salty, and bitter. An animal or a man experiences flavour when certain soluble substances are brought into contact with the taste buds ; 4. *Sight*. The two superior external senses are sight and hearing because of their proximity to reason, that is, they are more cognitional in character than the other external senses. The organ of sight is the eye, whose seat of vision is the retina, and its receptors being its rods and cones. Sight's object, color, is light as reflected or refracted by a surface ; 5. *Hearing*. The organ of hearing is the ear, in particular, Corti's organ in the inner ear. Its object is sound, which is experienced when a vibrating surface communicates its motion to a medium in contact with the ear.

Internal Senses. These senses are called internal because they have no external organs receptive of direct impressions from extra-mental reality but instead receive their data from the external senses by means of their respective

organs. There are four internal senses, namely, imagination, common sense (*sensus communis*), memory, and the estimative (which is the cogitative in man). 1. *Imagination*. Imagination is the power of forming pictures or images of things we have seen before even in the absence of the thing in reality that once actuated our external sense organs. We do indeed have the faculty of preserving sensible impressions produced in our consciousness and of representing, in the absence of the objects which produced these impressions. We have what is called visual imagination, (which is the power to recall how a person, thing or place looks like), auditory imagination, recalling various sounds (like running a song in our heads), and also the power to imagine how things felt, tasted, and smelt. We also have what is called creative imagination, wherein we combine in one image various sense impressions which were not actually perceived together, thus creating in one's mind an 'imaginary' being ; 2. *Common Sense*.[49[49]] Common sense (*sensus communis*), also called the central or synthetic sense in modern psychology, is the internal sense that unifies the products of the external senses into a unified perceptual whole. Individual external senses give us only their proper objects. Sight's proper object, for example, is colour, which is light reflected or refracted on a surface. Smell's proper object is odour. Now, it is impossible for the sense of sight not just to see, but also to smell odour, hear sounds, etc. The sense of smell, likewise, cannot see colours and hear sounds at the same time it takes in various odors. The various external senses cannot of themselves combine or integrate into unified whole objects the various sense impressions that they receive for each external sense organ can only receive its particular kind of sense impression. But we are able to see perceptual wholes like whole pizzas, apples, and dogs, so what power accounts for this perceptual unity? Common sense, which is the internal sense power that does this work of organization and synthesis ; 3. *Memory*. This power is like imagination in that it can form images of things even in the absence of the thing existing in extra-mental reality. However, memory goes further than imagination in that it puts our image of a thing in a definite past experience. In imagination I, for example, can picture in my mind my dog Snoopy; I can form an image of my dog in my mind. In memory, not only do I picture Snoopy, but I can remember when he bit me on March 25, twenty years ago on a rainy day. To remember something is to picture something as I actually experienced it on a definite past occasion, so that the occasion and the experience are as much a part of the memory as is the thing itself ; 4. *Estimative* (and cogitative in man). This internal sense is commonly called instinct. Animals (including men) perceive things not merely as objects

[49[49]] See also: B. MULLER-THYM, *The Common Sense*, "Thomist," 1940, pp. 315-343.

having certain sensible qualities, but also as being good or bad, desirable or repugnant, and useful or harmful to one's own being. An antelope, for example, perceives a lion in the distance not only as a thing having certain sensible determinations of colour, odor, size, etc., but also something dangerous to itself, a veritable enemy to its well-being, and without having to be taught, speedily runs away. Such dangerousness is not a sensible quality which any external sense organ can perceive, yet we observe animals with that ability to perceive things under such non-sensible aspects. These non-sensible aspects are aspects of individual sensible bodies not perceivable by the external senses, yet grasped by the sentient animal or human person in the total perceptive act. The internal sense power that does this is called the estimative sense in animals and the cogitative sense in humans. The cogitative is different from the estimative in that man can regulate and direct his instinct through the power of reason, while animals cannot.

Intellectual Knowledge. I shall first describe briefly what is meant by intellection, abstraction, ideas, and the difference between ideas and images. Then, I shall describe in outline form the process of ideogenesis (the birth of the idea).

Human intellection is the rational process of man's mental life, comprising three distinct processess: the formation of ideas and concepts, the formation of judgments, and the formation of inferences. Abstraction is the mental process in which, through an act of selective attention, we leave out of consideration one or more aspects of a complex total object so as to attend to some other aspect or aspects of this object. Generalizing abstraction is that form of abstraction wherein we mentally separate, through an act of selective attention, items which are common to a number of individual objects from those items in which these objects differ, and then arrange the objects having the common items into a class as a unit. The resulting product is the *universal idea*, applicable to the class as a whole and to each individual member of that class. Evidence for the existence of universal ideas is found in the common vocables of language, in definitions, and in scientific nomenclature and classifications. There are three degrees or grades of abstraction: physical, mathematical, and metaphysical. Isolating abstraction is that form of abstraction wherein, through an act of selective attention, we mentally separate a particular feature from the subject in which it exists and consider it as if it existed independently of a subject. The product of such an abstraction is the *abstract idea*.

The idea or concept is a mental sign whereby we grasp a certain essence. Concepts signify the essences of things; they signify *what things are*. Concepts or ideas are completely different from material and individual things. The former are universal while the latter are individual. Ideas or concepts are abstract (i.e. reduced to their essences and separated from what is incidental) while things are concrete and individualized. Ideas or concepts are also immaterial. We should also distinguish between images and ideas. Though an image and an idea are both species (from the Latin *species* meaning likeness), an image is a species of a sensible order of being while an idea is a species of an intelligible order of being. It is important to remember that the species is always a *sign* of the reality that it signifies. Sensible images represent accidents which are sensible, individual and material, while ideas signify the intelligible, universal, and immaterial reality in those sensible things.

3.9. Ideogenesis (Birth of the Idea)

What is the rapport between the intellect and the thing? There is nothing in the intellect which was not first (in some manner) in the senses. There are no innate ideas as is the Cartesian claim; ideas have their source outside the intellect; the intellect must derive them from things. Thus, a union between intellect and thing by means of a *cognitional species* is demanded. What is the role of the external senses in the process of ideogenesis? In the presence of the stimuli proceeding from the thing, the sentient subject actively produces within itself the vital response of *sensations*. These sensations represent the thing and the *rudimentary cognitional image* of the thing, the 'impressed sensible species.'[50][50] Then comes the role of man's internal senses. The central or

[50][50] "*The Nature of the Impressed Species*. 'Impressed species of the object – a 'species,' because it is a form which determines and specifies the cognitive power ; 'impressed,' because it comes to the cognitive potency from without and is passively received by it; 'of the object,' because it acts as a representative of the object…An impressed species of the object is necessary to determine a cognitive power to the act of knowing any finite object other than itself…Concerning the nature of the impressed species, the following are to be noted: The impressed species *actuates* the cognitive power and thus renders it fully capable of eliciting its act. In doing so, it also *specifies* that the act will be an act of knowing this particular object and no other. Considered entitatively, i.e., as a pure actuation and determination of the cognitive power, the impressed species is something physical or subjective and does not belong to the cognitive or intentional order in the strict sense of the term. It is an accidental modification of the cognitive power with which it enters into composition. However, the impressed species also *presents the object* whose species it is to the cognitive potency and thus enables this potency to become the object to be known. Taken in this way, the impressed species belongs to the cognitive order in the strict sense of the term. The mere reception of an impressed species is not yet cognition. For this reception is purely *passive* on the part of the receiving potency, which cognition is active. The *physical* change which occurs in cognitive sense organs is not the impressed species of sense cognition. Such physical changes may be prerequisite, but they belong to the material order. The impressed species is not that which is known, but *that by means of which* the object is known. It is prior in nature to the act of cognition and therefore not directly present to our awareness in cognitive acts. Its existence becomes known only through a process of

synthetic sense (common sense or *sensus communis*) combines the isolated sense qualities into a perceptual whole and refers them to the same definite thing. The result is the *phantasm* (or image), the completed or *formal cognitional image* or 'expressed sensible species'[51][51] of the thing. The phantasm (image) completes the knowledge of the thing on the sensory level.

After this comes the role of the agent intellect with its activity of abstraction. It is the power of the mind to abstract. The intellect[52][52] forms its ideas by turning its attention upon the content of the image[53][53] either of the

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reasoning. The impressed species is needed for cognition not only by reason of the subject but also by reason of the object. It is needed *by reason of the subject*, because the cognitive power needs to be actuated and specified to a definite object. It is needed *by reason of the object*, because cognition requires an object which is proportionate in immateriality to the cognitive power. Hence the object must present itself to the cognitive power in an immaterial way. But no material object, taken as it is physically, is immaterial; whence the necessity for it to be made immaterial in the knower by means of an impressed species. This immateriality, however, of the impressed species does not flow from the external object but from the cognitive subject in which the species is received, for whatever is received is received according to the mode of being of the receiver"(H. J. KOREN, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Animate Nature*, B. Herder, St. Louis, 1961, pp. 96-98). Author's note: I have changed "cognitive potency" into "cognitive power" as they mean the same thing here. "Cognition" is defined by Koren as "an immanent action by which the form of an object is had immaterially"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., p. 101).

[51][51] "*Nature of the Expressed Species*. Concerning the nature of the expressed species, the following are to be noted: Cognition is not for the sake of producing an expressed species, for it does not cease with the production of the species. But the expressed species is *for the sake of cognition*, as a means to reach the object when the object itself cannot be reached immediately. *Physically* or entitatively, the expressed species is an accidental modification of the subject, and related to it as act is to potency; *cognitively* or intentionally, the expressed species is united with the actuated potency as act with act, and makes the knower actually other than himself. An expressed species is *not always necessary* for cognition, but only when the obect itself cannot terminate the act of cognition. The need for an expressed species is generally recognized in the case of the imagination and the intellect. Their expressed species are called respectively the *phantasm* and the (formal) *concept* or mental word…The expressed species is *really distinct* from the impressed species. The impressed species is concerned with the principle or cause of cognition, while the expressed species is produced by the act of cognition; hence the two species are related as cause and effect and therefore really distinct"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., p. 100).

[52][52] "This cognitive power, called the intellect, is suprasensible in the sense that it is strictly immaterial and inorganic. By 'immaterial' here is meant that it is intrinsically independent of matter. However, this independence does not exclude the possibility of extrinsic or objective dependence upon matter. The immateriality of the intellect follows from the fact that the intellect knows the immaterial, for a cognitive power must be proportionate to its object. But the intellect can know the universal, which transcends the limits of space and time that characterize matter; the abstract, which leaves behind the concrete world of matter; the immaterial, which is free from matter. An organic power operates through its organ and therefore can reach only that which is extended in space and time. Therefore, the intellect is inorganic. The ability of the intellect to reflect upon itself also shows its immaterial nature. Self-reflection means that the principle and the object of the act of knowing are identical. But identity excludes any intermediary; hence there can be no organ through which the intellect knows itself…From the immateriality of the intellect it follws that no purely material being can have an intellect in the proper sense of the term; that intellection is an act of the soul alone; and that no part of the body can be called the seat of the intellect. Each man has his own intellect, for otherwise each one would not experience his acts of intellection as his very own acts"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., pp. 171-172).

[53][53] "*Dependence of the Intellect Upon the Phantasm (Image)*. Human intellect in is potency to understanding before it actually understands, and needs to be actuated by an impressed species. This impressed species is called the intelligible species. Experience shows that the actuation of the intellect somehow comes from the senses, specifically from the phantasm (image) of the imagination. The following facts may be adduced in proof

synthetic sense (common sense) or of the imagination. By means of abstraction, the intellect grasps the *essential elements* of the thing represented in the image, leaving aside the individualizing material determinations, thereby making the image 'intelligible.' This power or capacity of the intellect, whereby it actively modifies itself so as to represent within itself in an abstract manner what is concretely represented in the image, is termed the *active* or *agent intellect*.[54][54] The result of this abstractive process is the *impressed species of an intelligible order*, which is the 'idea' in a rudimentary form.

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of this assertion: a) If the working of the imagination is disturbed through injury to the brain, poisoning (narcotics or alcohol), or other causes, the intellect itself does not function properly even with respect to problems which previously were understood; b) When we have to explain a difficult intellectual problem we try to find sensible examples or analogies, so that phantasms (images) may be formed which can aid the intellect in the understanding of the problem; c) If the phantasm (image) of a sensible thing is completely absent, the intellect cannot form a proper idea of this thing; for instance, it is impossible to give a proper idea of color to a man who has been blind from birth. Accordingly, it is clear that our intellect does not operate without the phantasm (image)"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., pp. 173-174).

[54][54] "*Existence of an Agent Intellect*. The phantasm (image) is not the sole cause of the actuation and determination of the intellect by an intelligible species. Another cause must be acting together with the phantasm, and this cause must be *immaterial*, for it will have to explain the immateriality of the intelligible species. This cause cannot be the intellect itself which understands, because the intellect which understands is a passive potency and needs to be actuated by the species before being fully able to act. Therefore, we must admit the existence of another immaterial agent, distinct from the intellect which understands, as the cause of the immateriality of the intelligible species. This immaterial agent is called the *agent intellect*. To distinguish it from the intellect which understands, the latter is called the possible or *potential intellect*. …A phantasm is not actually but only *potentially* intelligible, because it is material in the sense that it is the image of an individual material being with its individual determinations. Therefore, a phantasm is not proportionate to the immaterial intellect. To become *actually* intelligible, the phantasm has to be dematerialized, i.e., stripped of its material conditions. But only an immaterial entity can dematerialize the phantasm. Therefore, we must admit the existence of such an immaterial entity, called the agent intellect.

"*The Nature of the Agent Intellect*. What is the nature of this immaterial agent which together with the phantasm actuates and determines the potential intellect? Is it to be identified with God Himself? Or a separate substance which operates in all men? Or an operative potency of each man? And if it is an operative potency, is it merely a different name expressing another function of one and the same intellectual potency or really distinct from the potential intellect? A brief consideration should be sufficient to show that the agent intellect is not God Himself. If God's intervention were needed every time our intellect understands something, to understand would be beyond man's natural powers. God would have given him an intellectual nature which somehow never is in working order. Being intellectual he would have been ordered by nature to understanding, yet deprived of the necessary natural means to understand. Thus God would have created a nature that is essentially deficient, which is against divine wisdom. For a similar reason we must say that the *agent intellect is not a separate spiritual substance*, for otherwise man would naturally be unable to understand. Moreover, if the agent intellect were a separate substance its causality would be independent of man; hence man would have no control over his acts of understanding, which is against experience. By exclusion, therefore, it follows that the agent intellect is an *operative power* of man, and consequently that there are as many agent intellects as there are human beings. The agent intellect and the potential intellect are *really distinct*. For otherwise the intellect would have to be in act and in potency at the same time and with respect to the same. As an agent intellect, it would have to be in act with respect to the intelligible species, because it produces this species; as a potential intellect it would have to be in potency with respect to this species, because it receives this species. Therefore, the agent and potential intellect are not merely different names indicating different functions of one and the same intellectual potency, but really distinct operative powers"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., pp. 174-177).

Then we have the role of the potential intellect (also called the passive or possible intellect), which is the power of the mind to understand.[55][55] It is the capacity or power of the mind to express the essence of the represented thing in an 'idea' or 'concept.' The essential elements, after being abstracted from the image, are presented by the agent intellect to the potential intellect; the latter expresses the elements in conceptual terms by gathering them together into an *abstract intellectual representation* of the thing. This completed idea or concept is the *expressed species of an intelligible order*,[56][56] a mental sign that signifies the essence of a thing. It is important for us know that the concept is not which we understand but that *by means of which* we understand. What is known in the

[55][55] "*Comparison of the Agent and the Potential Intellect*. Both the agent and potential intellect are immaterial powers of the soul and both belong to the cognitive order. Both are also necessary for intellection. The action of both is immanent. But while the action of the potential intellect is strictly immanent, for it remains in this intellect as its perfection, that of the agent intellect is immanent only in a wider sense, because it remains in the same supposit but terminates in another power (the potential intellect). Only the potential intellect is an intellect in the proper sense of the term, because only the potential intellect elicits acts of understanding. The agent intellect is an intellect only in an improper and analogous sense, inasmuch as with its causal influence there can be no act of understanding. The proper act of the agent intellect is to dematerialize phantasms by stripping them of their material conditions and presenting their essence to the potential intellect. The potential intellect is in potency and needs to be complemented by the intelligible species before being fully able to elicit its act of intellection. For this reason it is called a passive potency. The agent intellect, on the other hand, does not need to be complemented, but is always fully ready to act and by its action changes its object; hence it is said to be an active potency. The agent intellect is not active in the sense that its essence is its act, for nothing finite is its own act, but only in the sense that it elicits its act at once when a phantasm, is present. The phantasm, however, does not actuate the agent intellect – the material cannot act upon the immaterial – but is a necessary condition for the action of the agent intellect. The agent intellect does not reduce itself from potency to act, which is impossible, but connaturally passes from potency to act under the influence of the motion by which the First Cause moves all finite causes to their action. This influence can be either direct or through man's will. It should be clear that the First Cause moves also the potential intellect to its action"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., pp. 178-179).

[56][56] "*The Expressed Species of an Intelligible Order*. When the agent intellect and the phantasm (image) produce an intelligible species in the potential intellect, this intellect elicits its act of understanding. The act of understanding unites the knower with the object known and therefore must terminate in something corresponding exactly to that which is known. But the external object may not even be present; and even if present does not correspond exactly to that which is understood, for the external onject, which exists concretely and individually, is understood as separate from the individual determinations of matter. Therefore, in the absence of a term corresponding exactly to that which is understood, it is necessary for the intellect to express in itself an image of that which it understands. This cognitive image is called the expressed species of an intelligible order, the mental word, or concept. In this species the intellect knows the external object. Experience shows the existence of such a species, for in our intellectual life we are aware of the fact that we form concepts, definitions, and judgments of the things understood, and these concepts, definitions, and judgments are forms of expressed species. The expressed species of an intelligible order is really distinct from the impressed species. The impressed species is a principle of the act of intellection, while the expressed species is a 'product' of this act. The expressed species of an intelligible order is *really distinct from the act of intellection*. It is 'produced' by this act, and that which produces is always really distinct from that which is produced. Finally, the expressed species of an intelligible order is *really distinct from the object understood*, for to understand an object is quite different from understanding its concept. The concept is merely a means in which the object is known. The intellect understands the object when it considers the object, but understands the concept of the object only when it reflects upon the 'product' of its understanding. What we understand is not primarily the concept of the object, but the object of which the concept is a cognitive image (not to be confused with the sensible image or phantasm)"(H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., pp. 180-181).

first instance is the object (the thing) itself in reality. An idea is simply an instrument of knowledge, not the object which we know in the first instance. We can, of course, make ideas the objects of our knowledge in a second instance, in a second movement, which is in reflection, but it is crucial to make clear that what we know in the first movement of our mind is the thing in extra-mental, extra-subjective reality. To say that what we know *in the first instance* can be only our ideas and impressions in our mind is to fall into the error of subjectivism.

But the process of intellection does not stop with the formation of the concept for the latter's abstract nature does not perfectly express the extra-mental thing that is intended to be understood, which is individual and material (we are considering here knowledge of the extra-mental physical world). After the agent intellect's separation of the essence there is then followed, in the process of intellection, an operation in the inverse sense called the *conversio ad phantasmata*, which is the conversion of the mind to experience. "The nature of the rock or of any other material thing cannot be completely and truly known until one knows it as existent in particulars, which are understood by means of the senses and the imagination. Therefore, it is necessary, in order to that the intellect may comprehend in act its proper object, that it convert itself to experience *ad phantasmata*, in such a way as to contemplate the universal nature as existent in the particular."[57][57] "Our intellect abstracts the intelligible species from experiences, insofar as it considers the nature of things in a universal way; and yet, it comprehends them in experience, since it cannot understand the things from where it abstracts the species, without turning to experience."[58][58] Alejandro Llano explains that "*the proper object of the human intellect* – which is a mind united to a body – *is a quiddity or nature existing in corporeal matter*: starting from this it can rise to the acquisition of some knowledge of incorporeal realities. It is proper to a corporeal nature to exist in an individual, which does not subsist without corporeal matter. For example, it is proper to the very nature of stone or horse to exist respectively in this concrete stone or in that specific horse; in the reality of things there is no such thing as a stone-in-general or a horse-in-the-abstract. Therefore, the nature of material things cannot be known completely and truly if it is not known as existing in some particular thing. But we apprehend the particular thing with the senses, and not directly with the intellect (there is no intellectual intuition, in the sense of a direct knowledge of essences: peripatetics and Kantians agree on this). Therefore, in order that the intellect may understand its proper object in

[57][57] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 84, a. 7, c.
[58][58] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 5.

act, it is necessary that it return to experience, so as to see the universal nature existing in a particular instance. This return to experience is what Thomas Aquinas calls *conversio ad phantasmata*, return to images. But it is important to bear in mind that the *phantasma* or *sense image*, is not that which is directly known, but rather a similitude of the known thing, which is directly known through this similitude. So the *phantasma* is taken in its intentional being, in its objective content (which is a likeness to the known thing), and not its psychological or 'physical being.' By means of a reflection which considers the nature of the knowing act and the species by which one knows, the image is known as an image."[59][59]

3.10. The Will

3.10.1. Definition of the Will

Like the intellect, *the will is a spiritual operative power (faculty) of man*. It is spiritual, inorganic, for it is an appetite consequent upon the intellect and therefore must belong to the same level as the inorganic intellect itself. The *will is an appetite*, which is the desire of a conscious being for a good. Appetite follows cognition (knowledge) because it follows form. The inclination determined by an apprehended form is our appetite. "Therefore, just as in those beings that have knowledge forms exist in a higher manner and above the manner of natural forms, so there must be in them an inclination surpassing the natural inclination which is called the natural appetite. And this superior inclination belongs to the appetitive power of the soul, through which the animal is able to desire what it apprehends, and not only that to which it is inclined by its natural form. And so it is necessary to assign an appetitive power to the soul."[60][60]

The will is a rational appetite. *It is man's rational appetency; it is the power to strive for an intellectually perceived good and to shun an intellectually perceived evil*. Not only can one prove *a priori* the existence of intellectual appetencies or acts of appetite from the proof that cognition follows appetite, but the existence of intellectual appetencies or acts of will is also a datum of experience. Freedom, justice, magnanimity, and honor cannot be apprehended by the senses but are objects of intellectual cognition. Such intellectual knowledge gives rise to a desire for the possession of freedom, justice, magnanimity and honor. Thus, experience shows that there are

[59][59] A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, 2001, pp. 123-124.
[60][60] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 80, a. 1, c.

appetencies (acts of will) based upon intellectual cognition. Acts of will occur intermittently. When a person is asleep or unconscious his will does not act, so we must admit the existence of an operative faculty or potency of intellectual or rational appetency. This faculty or potency is called the will.

The will is really distinct from its subject for in creatural beings essence and operative faculty are always distinct. Only in God is will identified with His essence. Man's will is also really distinct from its fellow operative potency the intellect, for both have different formal objects. The formal object of the will, or the aspect under which the will tends to anything, is the good in general. The good is realized concretely in existing things, though not to the same extent, and these things constitute the material objects of the will. It is possible for the will to tend to anything which in any respect is apprehended as good by the intellect, whether particular or universal, material or immaterial. We experience the fact that the will can tend to the particular and material, such as a sumptuous dinner, as well as to the universal like freedom, justice and honor, or to the immaterial such as God.

The will necessarily tends towards the end for which it is made. It tends towards what the intellect presents to it as desirable or good, and towards its own happiness or repose in the possession of the good. The will is necessitated in its tendency towards the good in general, good in its common aspects, but it is not necessitated with respect to particular things presented by the intellect as desirable. The will is not necesitated in its particular acts. Many of the things towards which the will tends have not a desirability of their own, but are understood as things by which good may be obtained. That is, many things are willed as means to the good desired, not as the good itself which is the end. Now, just as someone who is forced to go to New York but is free to choose the means (airplanes, trains, buses, by various routes) by which he hopes to reach that city, so the will is necessitated and not free in its quest for the good, but is free to choose, in the light of the intellect, what particular means it shall use in its quest of the goal.

3.10.2. The Rapport Between Intellect and Will

The intellect in itself is a more excellent faculty than the will, for the intellect attains its object by knowing it, while the will only tends towards its object. However, under certain aspects, the will is superior to the intellect, for when a good is greater or nobler than the soul itself, it is better to will it, that is, to love it, than merely to know it. For example, it is better to love God than

simply to know Him. But in the case wherein the good is less noble than the soul, the intellect, with respect to this good, is superior to the will. For example, knowledge of material things like diamonds, gold bars, and rubies, is better than loving these things.

The intellect moves the will by showing it what is attractive. Therefore, the intellect moves the will in the manner of a final cause. The will, in turn, moves the intellect in the manner of an active, agent or efficient cause for only the will can apply the intellect to the study of this or that particular thing. It can turn away the attention of the intellect from one thing and fix it on another. It also exercises an active control over other natural faculties of man, but it has no control over the vegetative powers in themselves.

3.10.3. The Will of Necessity Desires Happiness (or the Good as Such)

The *absolutely ultimate subjective last end* of the human person is happiness, which he wills necessarily. Man is free to will or not will any particular good, but he is not free as regards happiness. All men, regardless of race, creed, or nationality, desire to be happy. Even the robber who robs a bank does so because he thinks that by doing such an act he will in the end be happy in possessing his ill-gotten riches. Even the unfortunate person who commits suicide thinks that by accomplishing that act he or she will be happy as death will end all his or her troubles and anxieties. The hedonist seeks pleasure for he thinks that he will be happy. The scholar seeks intellectual knowledge for he or she thinks that he or she will be happy.

Now, man's *absolutely ultimate objective last end* is God the Supreme Good who gives us true happiness. True happiness is a state made perfect by the aggregation of all good things. Three things are necessary for human beatitude or perfect happiness, namely, 1. the actual possession of all good consonant with human nature ; 2. the exclusion of all evil ; and 3. the eternal duration of the state of beatitude and the certainty of this eternal duration. As was said, all men seek happiness save no one. Though all necessarily desire this, nevertheless, they disagree among themselves on just what the object of true happiness ultimately consists in. True happiness cannot be found, as many erroneously believe, in sensual pleasure, power, fame, or even in sheer intellectual knowledge, since they cannot perfectly satisfy him, but rather in the beatific vision of God. Since we are on this earth for a short time and do not as yet have this vision of God, which is only possible in the next life, our happiness while on earth would consist in the virtuous life in grace, doing the

will of God, preparing for eternal happiness through the observance of the moral law.

3.10.4. The Will, However, Does Not Desire Any Particular Good Necessarily

The will's necessity in willing the good in general or happiness does not necessitate its willing of any determinate particular good. Particular goods are willed as a means to this end (the universal good). Many particular goods, for example, a computer or a luxury yacht, are not absolutely necessary for happiness, and thus need not be willed even though one must necessarily will happiness. The observance of the Eternal Law of God, on the other hand, is necessary for happiness, but one can desire happiness without willing even this necessary means to it if he fails to see that they are necessary means.

There is no concrete being or action which man necessarily wills in this life. He must indeed necessarily will the absolute good (the good as such) but only concrete things presented to his will are particular goods, things seen as good under one aspect but not under another. In this world, man finds that for each good there is also presented a rival good; thus, he is never necessitated in his choice of any particular good. Even though one's absolutely ultimate subjective last end is happiness which consists in the beatific vision of our absolutely ultimate objective last end, God, the will in this life is not necessitated to choose God, in whom alone consists our true happiness. Man's faith and reason may tell him that God is his absolute Good, but he does not see God in this life, as do the blessed in heaven. He appears to man in this life as one good in competition with others. Many times, God's eternal law seems to be an obstacle to the attainment of one's happiness, since the spiritual path is much more difficult than the path of the senses and passions. For St. Thomas, "until through the certitude of the Divine Vision the necessity of such connection be shown, the will does not adhere to God of necessity, nor to those things which are of God. But the will of the man who sees God in His essence of necessity adheres to God, just as now we desire of necessity to be happy."[61[61]] Therefore, although we necessarily will the good as such (happiness), there is not, in this earthly life of ours, any particular means to happiness that we necessarily will. No particular finite good is capable of moving the will necessarily.

[61[61]] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 82, a. 2, c.

3.10.5. Freedom of Exercise and Freedom of Specification

Freedom of Exercise. As regards the act of willing, the will may be free to act or not to act. This freedom is called *freedom of exercise*. It is the power to perform or to omit an act. It is the freedom of the will between acting and not acting.

Freedom of Specification. As regards the object, the will may be free to choose between diverse objects, such as swimming, playing tennis, studying, and typing. This is called *freedom of specification*. It is the power of choosing one of two or more alternative means to an end.

"In an act of will, that which moves the will as to *specification* and object is the intellect, since the intellect presents the will with the apprehended good which moves it to desire. In respect to *exercise*, the will itself it its own moving principle, for the will as agent moves all the powers of the soul, including itself."[62][62]

3.10.6. The Limits of Human Freedom

Against the Sartrean concept of freedom as boundless, there are in fact limits to our human freedom. *First*: Our being is not identified with our freedom, we having our acts of being received in a distinct potency (the essence) that limits it. Our will is merely an operative potency (faculty), an accident, that properly belongs to the human subject, who is the agent of his free acts; *Second*: Man is not free as regards the tendency towards the good as such (or happiness), though he is free with respect to particular goods; *Third*: Experience shows us that the human person is not free to choose his not being corporeal and sexual; *Fourth*: He is not free to violate the principle of non-contradiction in his speech for fear of rendering communication impossible; *Fifth*: Man is not free as regards his being a child of his time. He is born in a definite place and in a definite cultural milieu, and these factors certainly have a powerful bearing on his upbringing and views, even though free will is not destroyed; and *Sixth*: Man is to a certain extent influenced and conditioned by his passions, but again, not to the extent that it destroys free will.

3.11. The Human Soul

[62][62] BRO. BENIGNUS, *Nature, Knowledge, God,* Bruce, Milwaukee, 1953, p. 251.

We learn about the existence of the human soul by observing its activities of intellection and willing that pertain to the human soul's operative powers or faculties. Man has vital actions and therefore must have a first vital principle, which is the soul. Since he has the rational vital powers of intellect and will that transcend sense knowledge, since they pertain to the realm of the universal which is gotten through the intellectual activity of abstraction, man must not have merely a sensitive soul but rather a rational or intellectual soul. Since the activities of intellection and volition are immaterial, their operative powers of intellect and will must likewise be immaterial, and their first principle, the rational soul, must likewise be immaterial, for no effect can be greater than its cause. Something immaterial cannot originate from something material, which has a much lesser degree of act of being than immaterial realities which are so because of their particularly intense level of *esse*. The human soul is, therefore, the first principle of man's rational life.

The rational soul is a substance since the acts of understanding and volition are merely accidents that must inhere in something whose essence or nature it is proper to be by itself and not in another subject. Such accidents do not have act of being of their own but *are* by reason of their substance of which they are perfections of. Now, the immaterial acts of intellection and volition are acts of the rational soul alone which has no matter in it; therefore, the soul is a substance.

The rational soul is one substance. One and the same soul remains as a permanent principle throughout the succession of acts of understanding and willing. Reflection evidences the fact that we experience our acts of intellect and will as acts of the same I which remains throughout their succession.

The rational soul, though capable of subsistence after the dissolution of the body, is an incomplete substance. Man is a composite substance of body and soul. Now a substantial union resulting in a sole substance can be possible only if the components are incomplete substances or substantial co-principles. Although the human soul is something subsistent, having the act of being of its own, it nevertheless is not a complete substance but rather an incomplete one. An incomplete substance is one whose nature demands that it be co-joined with another substantial co-principle, so as to be able to constitute a single complete substance. Matter taken by itself and form taken by itself are examples of incomplete substances. A human soul taken in itself is an incomplete substance, and a human body taken in itself is an incomplete substance. The human soul and the human body taken together constitute the single individual person, a

complete substance, a person defined as an individual substance of a rational nature. A complete substance is one that does not need to be co-joined with the another substantial co-principle so as to constitute a single individual substance. It exists in such a manner that its nature does not demand a further union with a substantial co-principle. A dog, a rat, a horse, and an apple are all examples of complete substances.

The rational soul is simple, meaning that its essence is not composed of parts, viz., matter and form, which are constituent principles of a composite essence. We find that the rational soul is simple because it is the principle of operations that are intrinsically independent of matter. If the soul were composed of matter and form, its operation could not in any way be independent from matter, for action follows being (*operari sequitur esse*). If the rational soul is essentially simple it follows that it is devoid of quantitative parts, for quantitative extension can only be found in something material.

The rational soul is spiritual since it exists independently of matter. From the fact that the acts of intellection and willing are intrinsically independent of matter it follows that the soul, which is the principle of these actions, is likewise intrinsically independent of matter, for action follows being and no effect is greater than its cause, that is, in this case, something immaterial cannot be derived from something material which has a much less intensity of participated act of being than something incorporeal. “There is one set of operations, the activities of understanding and willing, which do not basically depend upon anything material. In the act of intellectual knowing, as we have seen, the forms of things exist in man as universal, and therefore as nonmaterial. This means that the intellect must be nonmaterial, for something material could not be the receptacle of the immaterial any more than a tin can could contain the idea of patriotism or any other abstract idea. If, in other words, there were matter in the intellect, the forms that are joined to it in the act of knowing could not be universal because where there is matter there is quantity, dimension, individuality. The intellectual activity of man, then, is intrinsically independent of matter, The act of the will is similarly independent of matter, for its object is always something known under the aspect of the universal good. Since the actions of knowing and willing are independent of matter, the principle or ground of these activities, the soul, must be independent of matter. If it is independent of matter for its activities, it must be equally independent of matter for its existence. Therefore we can call the soul of man a spirit as well as a soul,

for this is what being a spirit means: to be independent of matter both as to its existence and operation."[63][63]

The rational soul is really distinct from the body, which follows from the fact that the intellectual soul is spiritual, while the human body is material.

Man has his own rational soul. Reflection reveals to each of us that each man is an understanding and willing I, which is distinct from other understanding and willing I's.

There can be only one soul in each man. Though he has vegetative, sensitive, and rational powers, he doesn't have three different souls (a vegetative soul, a sensitive soul, and a rational soul) but rather a single rational soul, it being the principle not only of the intellectual life of the human person, but also of his vegetative and sensitive life.

The human soul is the substantial form of the body. The soul actualizes and animates the body and is the substantial form which makes the living body the specific kind of living body it is: a human body. The human soul is a non-corporeal substance, an incomplete substance which together with the incomplete substance of the human body constitute the complete substance of the human person, man the hylemorphic composite of body and soul. The soul is an incomplete substance endowed with the operative faculties of intellect and will. In this life our soul has an extrinsic dependence on the body, not an intrinsic dependence. It is capable of existing and operating *per se* even if severed from its union with the body at death, since it has the act of being (*esse*) of its own which is communicated to the body. The human soul, then, is truly a subsistent substance, though, while it is a complete soul, it nevertheless is not a complete human being as Plato erroneously taught. Man, rather, is a compound of body and soul. The human soul is a spiritual substance, an element of the human composite or compound, but in itself is devoid of composition or compounding. There is no matter whatsoever in the soul, it being a substantial spiritual form, a spirit. Souls, being substantial and subsistent forms, having no material elements or parts to break up, cannot decay, disintegrate, or cease existence. They have no intrinsic dependence on matter for their existence and operations. Therefore, they are incorruptible substances which cannot perish or die. It is the spiritual soul which, substantially joined with matter, sets up and constitutes the one existing living human person. The human soul is joined with

[63][63] D. SULLIVAN, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, Tan Books, Rockford, 1992, pp. 115-116.

its human body in a substantial union, constituting one human substance. Each human person has his or her own soul and there are as many human souls as there are existing, individual human beings.

Where does the human soul come from? A man's soul could not have come from the bodies, nor the composite of body and soul, nor from the souls of his parents. Only God can create a rational soul, infusing this soul into the human body which, together, forms the hylemorphic composite that is man. Parents cannot create the soul of their offspring for only God can create; only God has absolute control over the act of being of something, which he produces out of nothing. Human parents only have their acts of being from another, namely, God, so in no way can one's human soul come from one's parents. The parents, on the other hand, produce one component of their offspring's hylemorphic composite, namely, the human body. Though one's human soul is not produced by one's parents, the union of soul with the body is brought about by the parents inasmuch as they produce a human body which necessary needs to be animated by a human soul which is its act.

The human soul is immortal. Since man's soul has the act of being of its own, making it subsist even after the dissolution of the body at death, it is endowed with immortality, that is, it will continue to exist forever. It cannot corrupt since it is simple, not having parts to break up or dissolve.

3.12. The Ultimate Metaphysical Foundation of Human Freedom

The foundation of action lies in being. Each being inasmuch as it is, is also active, and the more something participates in the act of being the more it is active. Human freedom is a very high form of activity, and is founded upon a particularly intense participation in the act of being proper to the personal subject, agent of his activities of intellection and volition. The ultimate metaphysical foundation of human freedom lies *in the act of being of the soul* of the human subject, agent of his free acts. The human soul is spiritual inasmuch as it receives directly from God the act of being through an immediate creation and, inasmuch as it is form, communicates this act of being to the human body which participates in this act of being. Therefore, the soul is emergent with respect to the body, possessing its act of being, received from the Pure Act of Being, as something of its own. Its subsistent and spiritual character renders the soul the principle of free human actions, founded upon the immanent dynamism of intending and willing. The act of being which the human person possesses thanks to his soul explains why he is an original source of activity, why he is

capable of self-donation, of giving himself to his Maker, why he is able to unite his limited human will to the Divine Will. Human freedom must be brought back to its foundation in the metaphysics of being, particularly centering upon the act of being, the act of acts and perfection of perfections. Man is free first of all in his being before he is free in his actions. Operative autonomy is founded upon ontological autonomy.

CHAPTER 4

PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE

4.1. Philosophy of Knowledge Defined

Philosophy of knowledge or gnoseology (from the Greek *gnosis* = knowledge, and *logos* = study) is defined as *the science of knowledge studied from the philosophical point of view, or the science of knowledge in its ultimate causes and first principles.* With this definition there is indicated both the material and formal objects of this philosophical discipline, the *material object* being *knowledge* and the *formal object* being *knowledge studied from the philosophical point of view* or *knowledge in its ultimate causes and first principles*.

Since knowledge is a rapport between thought and reality, and that the end of this rapport is the truth, one can also describe philosophy of knowledge as *a metaphysical inquiry into truth*. Why should we say specifically a metaphysical inquiry and not just a philosophical inquiry? It is because philosophy of knowledge's sphere of inquiry is coextensive with metaphysics since, if the latter is concerned with the philosophical study of being, the former deals with our knowledge of being, that is, being inasmuch as it is knowable by the human mind. Though philosophy of knowledge is an essential part of metaphysics (metaphysics understood in the broad sense as the philosophical study of being), it is not the foundation of metaphysics proper or ontology (which is the philosophical study of being as being). Metaphysics is the foundation of knowledge since knowledge is not the foundation of being but rather being the foundation of knowledge.

Various names have been given to our philosophical study of knowledge such as *criticism* and *criteriology*, but rather than express a philosophical inquiry into the processes of human knowledge, these titles instead invoke Cartesian and Kantian immanentist criticism and doubt when confronted with common sense certainties and the first principles of human knowledge, and therefore these names should be avoided. Likewise to be avoided is the term *epistemology* since it refers above all to *philosophy of science* or *theory of science*. Philosophy of knowledge or gnoseology are the best names to describe the philosophical study of knowledge since they embrace the whole sphere of

questions that regard the possibility for the human mind to grasp being in the knowledge process.

4.2. Truth

Logical truth[64][64] is the conformity of the mind (our judgments) with things or reality. *Veritas est adequatio intellectus ad rem*. Truth in the strict sense is not found in simple apprehension but in the second operation of the mind, judgment. For example, if I say that elephants have wings I have just made a false statement. Why? Simply because it does not conform with reality. If I affirm, on the other hand, that elephants are mammals, my statement is true because it conforms with the reality of things. Logical truth, or the truth of the mind in conformity with reality, is to be distinguished from what is called ontological truth, also called transcendental truth, which is the truth of things and is studied in metaphysics. Truth has a number of properties, namely: 1. it is *knowable by man* (man is capable of grasping the natures of things by the intellect and forming true judgments about reality, contrary to such philosophies such as Hume and Kant wherein extra-mental reality as it is in itself is utterly unknowable); 2. it is *one* (that is, there cannot exist several truths that would reciprocally contradict one other); 3. it is *indivisible*; 4. it is *immutable* (that is, necessary truths are always true, not changing with time. Abortion was intrinsically evil two thousand years ago, it is intrinsically evil today, and will be intrinsically evil a thousand years from now); and 5. it is *absolute* (that is, it is not relative to man or to the situations of man. There does not exist a truth of mind opposed to the truth of others. Racism, for example, is wrong for oneself and for all others).

4.3. States of the Mind in Confrontation with Truth

There are various states of the mind when confronted with truth.[65][65] The various states that the mind may cross before arriving at a certain judgment are

[64][64] For in-depth studies concerning logical truth, see: B. ROMEYER, *Essai d'une étude critique de la connaissance sur la théorie thomiste de la vérité*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1932 ; G. BRAC SPERI, *Il concetto di verità in S. Tommaso d'Aquino*, Verona, 1942 ; J. PIEPER, *Wahrheit und Dinge*, Kosel, München, 1947 ; K. BECKER, *Zur Aporie des geschichtlichen Wahrheit*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 1964 ; L. FONTANA, *Filosofia della verità*, Asteria, Turin, 1966 ; J. GARCÍA LÓPEZ, *El valor de la verdad y otros estudios*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 1967 ; J. GARCÍA LÓPEZ, *Doctrina de Santo Tomás sobre la Verdad*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 1967 ; G. SKIRBEKK (ed.), *Wahrheitstheorien*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1977 ; M. DUMMET, *Truth and Other Enigmas*, Duckworth, London, 1978 ; L. B. PUNTEL, *Wahrheitstheorien in der neueren Philosophie*, Darmstadt, 1978 ; W. FRANZEN, *Die Bedeutung von "whar" und "Wahrheit,"* Freiburg-München, 1982.

[65][65] For in-depth studies on these various states of mind, see: A. FARGES, *La crisi della certezza*, Siena, 1911 ; L. KEEKER, *The Problem of Error from Plato to Kant*, Gregorian University Press, Rome, 1934 ; M. D'ARCY, *The Nature of Belief*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1945 ; R. VERNEAUX, *Doute et croyance*, "Rev.

either ignorance, doubt, or opinion. *Ignorance* in the strict sense is simply the absence of knowledge in a subject. *Doubt* is a state of the mind wherein the intellect fluctuates between affirming and denying a given proposition, without being attracted more in one direction than in the other. It is a suspension of judgment when faced with a possible proposition and its contradiction as well. *Opinion* is a state of mind wherein the intellect postulates a judgment without certainty and with a fear of being mistaken. Here, the mind is not certain of possessing the truth though it retains that a determined position has more probability, for there are in it reasons of greater weight than in the contrary position, even if there be no decisive reason as yet.

Certainty is the state of mind wherein one has the security of resting within the truth. In the certain judgment the mind adheres to a truth in a firm way without any vacillation. *Faith* is an assent because of the testimony of someone else. In faith (whether it be a purely human faith or whether it be supernatural faith based on the assent to the truths revealed by God Himself who does not deceive nor can be deceived), the will moves the intellect to assent with certainty, based on the testimony and the authority of another, with no hesitation about the truth of the contrary position. Lastly, *error* consists in affirming the truth of what is false.

phil. Louvain," 1947, pp. 22-44 ; F. M. TYRELL, *The Role of Assent in Judgment*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1948 ; J. J. GRIFFIN, *The Interpretation of the Two Thomistic Definitions of Certitude*, "Laval théologique et philosophique," 1954, pp. 9-35.

CHAPTER 5

METAPHYSICS

5.1. The Nature of Metaphysics

5.1.1. The Term "Metaphysics"

For a long time scholars thought that the term "metaphysics"[66][66] (from the Greek meaning literally "after the physics"), originated from the grammarian or librarian Andronicus of Rhodes (first half of the first century B.C.) who first gave the title "the books which follow the physics" ([τά] μετὰ [τὰ] φυσικὰ [βιβλια]) in his re-ordered edition of Aristotle's works wherein he placed the Stagirite's fourteen books of first philosophy after those concerned with physics. But this position has become quite tenuous with the publication of studies in the middle half of the twentieth century, namely, those of Paul Moraux,[67][67] Hans Reiner,[68][68] and Anton-Herman Chroust[69][69] of the University of Notre Dame. Chroust believes that the designation attributed by scholars to Andronicus of Rhodes "which owes its origin to a library cataloguing reference and, hence, to a mere accident born out of embarassment and practical necessity…this fanciful story…borders on the incredible."[70][70] His first documented proof favorable to his theory comes from Alexander of Aphrodisias' *Commentary to Aristotle's Metaphysics*, written around 200 A.D. In this commentary Alexander notes that Aristotle himself described his books on first philosophy as μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, for as regards our noetical process this subject matter comes after the physics (it belongs to a higher level of abstraction). It is true that first philosophy (metaphysics) by nature (in itself) comes before the physics (by reason of its sublimity), but with reference to our limited minds which start from what it accessible to the senses, physics comes before metaphysics. Another source that Chroust gives us is Asclepius'

[66][66] The latin translation into "metaphysica," says Chroust, "probably goes back to Boethius, *De Interpretatione*, book I, chap. 5 [ed. Melser, p. 74]" (A-H. CHROUST, *op cit*., p. 600).
[67][67] P. MORAUX, *Les listes anciennes des ouvrages d'Aristote*, Louvain, 1951.
[68][68] H. REINER, *Die Entstehung und ursprünliche Bedeutung des Namens Metaphysik*, "Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung," 8 (1954) pp. 210-237 ; H. REINER, *Die Entstehung der Lehre vom bibliothekarischen Ursprung des Namens Metaphysik*, "Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung," 9 (1955), pp. 77-99.
[69][69] A.-H. CHROUST, *The Origin of "Metaphysics*," "The Review of Metaphysics," 14 (1961), pp. 601-616.
[70][70] A.-H. CHROUST, *op. cit*., p. 602.

Commentary (6th century A.D.),[71][71] which to a great extent is reliant on Alexander. In his commentary, Asclepius says that Aristotle himself called his work μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, for it systematically follows the books of the *Physics*.[72][72] Chroust goes on to maintain, along with Asclepius, that the term μετὰ τὰ φυσικά "to be sure, may have had its origin in the sequence of the Aristotelian works, but this sequence is by no means an external or accidental 'order of shelving' – an incident in the techniques used by librarians. It is rather a deliberate and necessary sequence that is decisively determined by the 'order' – the 'prior' or 'posterior' – of our noetic process. And this noetic process reverses the natural process or order. This fact, according to Asclepius, determines the didactic sequence which definitely calls for a *Physics-Metaphysics* sequence. Aristotle himself, Asclepius concludes, has planned this vital sequence. Hence the 'order of shelving' merely follows the 'topical order.'[73][73] Chroust believes that the term "first philosophy"[74][74] that the Stagirite utilized to describe metaphysics expresses that which is first in the order of nature, while the term "metaphysics" proceeding in a reverse order, expresses that which is last "according to us," that is, according to our cognitive processes.

After a time the term "metaphysics" stuck because it aptly describes this philosophical science concerned with the ultimate causes and first principles of all things above all the particular sciences.[75][75] During the seventeenth century the term "ontology," as a substitute for metaphysics, began to make its appearance in the works of Goclenius[76][76] and Clauberg,[77][77] but was popularized by the German philosopher Christian Wolff (1679-1754). "Ontology" comes from the Greek meaning "the science of being." Though rationalist philosophers have a history of preferring the term "ontology" over "metaphysics" both are valid terms and can be used interchangeably.

5.1.2. Metaphysics Defined

Metaphysics is the study of the ultimate causes and first principles of all reality. *It is also the science of being as being*. Its material object is *being*. Its

[71][71] ASCLEPIUS, *Asclepius in Metaphysica*, praefatio, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. VI, part 2, Berlin, 1888.
[72][72] Cf. A-H. CHROUST, *op. cit*., pp. 604-605.
[73][73] A.-H., CHROUST, *op. cit*., p. 605. Cf. P. MORAUX, *op. cit*., p. 315.
[74][74] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, book 6, chapter 1; 1026a, 24.
[75][75] Cf. I. DÜRING, *Aristoteles. Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*, 1966, p. 591s.
[76][76] R. GOCLENIUS, *Lexicon philosophicum quo tamquam clave philosophiae fores aperiuntur*, Frankfurt am Main, 1613, p. 16.
[77][77] J. CLAUBERG, *Ontosophia*, chapter 1, 1656.

formal object is *being as being*. Our science delves into the metaphysical structure of being, its properties (or the transcendentals of being), and causes (material, formal, efficient, and final causality).

5.2. Being (*Ens*)

The notion of being (*ens*) implies a composition of a subject (that "something" which *is* and is the real subject to which the act of being belongs), and an act (the very act of being of that "something"). The subject which has *esse* and the act of being itself are the two elements that constitute a unity as an individual being (*ens*) implies the presence of the act of being (*esse*). Being (*ens*) signifies primarily the individual thing which *is*, and is referred to as being insofar as it has the act of being. In a concomitant sense, being means the *esse* of the individual being for a thing can only *be* if it is in possession of the act of being. Consequently, being means something that really exists.

5.3. Being is Analogical

Equivocal Terms. Equivocal terms are terms used with entirely different meanings. In univocal terms the same term, in at least two occurences of the term, has meanings completely different from one another. Examples of equivocal terms: 1. "Pen" as in the writing instrument, and "pen" as in pig pen which houses animals ; 2. "Bill" as in a piece of paper from a company showing what you owe, and "bill" as in the parts of a bird's jaws ; 3. "Fan" as in an electric fan, and "fan" as in an admirer or follower ; and 4. "Seal" an emblem or figure used as evidence of authenticity, and "seal" the sea mammal that feeds on fish and has limbs reduced to flippers.

Univocal Terms. A term is univocal if it signifies exactly the same concept, or essence, in (at least) two occurrences of the term. Univocal terms have one and only one meaning. They are constantly used in an identical sense. For example, when I say "A dog is an animal," and "A cat is an animal," "animal" in both propositions is univocal. In "A fly is an insect," and "A mosquito is an insect," "insect" in both sentences is univocal.

Analogical Terms. Terms are analogical when the term, in at least two occurences of the term, has several meanings which are partly the same and partly different. Analogical concepts are predicated of their subjects in a way that is partly the same and partly different. Analogical terms share in the same perfection but have a diversity in the manner of possessing that perfection. For

example, there is a difference between a good rock, a good plant, a good car, a social good, and a good person. The metaphysical foundation of analogy lies in the different ways various subjects possess the same perfections. Different manners of being results in different manners of signifying. Now, an analogical term may be based either on the analogy of proportionality or on the analogy of attribution of which there are two types, the analogy of extrinsic attribution and the analogy of intrinsic attribution.

Analogy of Proportionality. In the analogy of proportionality, the analogous term is applied to unlike things because of some proportion or resemblance existing between them. A concept is predicated with the analogy of proportionality when several subjects possess a common perfection in ways that are not exactly but only proportionately the same. There can be an analogy of proportionality in the mathematical order, for example, with the proportion between quantities such as the double proportion obtaining in 2:1, 4:2, 8:4 and so on. These ratios are proportionately equal so we are able to say that 2:1 equals 4:2 equals 8:4. Though it is true that four is not equal to eight, nevertheless, the relation 4:2 is identical with the relation 8:4. Such an equality is termed a proportional quality. We also see the analogy of proportionality working in other fields such as that of philosophy. We can say, through a similarity of relations, that matter is to form as potency is to act. Metaphors also belong to the class of analogy of proportionality. We say that hikers begin their adventure at "the foot" of the mountain, "foot" because of its resemblance to the position of the foot with regard to the human body. Graphic comparisons and parables also employ the analogy of proportionality.

Analogy of Attribution. In the analogy of attribution the analogous term is applied in an absolute sense to one thing and is then attributed to other things because of an intrinsic relation which they have towards the first. While analogy of proportionality merely compares different proportions, the analogy of attribution goes further, pointing to one of the terms of comparison as the principle of the rest. A perfection is predicated with the analogy of attribution if, among several subjects of a common perfection, there is one which possesses the perfection in all its fullness, while the rest possess it in derived manner or by what is called participation. In the analogy of attribution there is always a central and primary meaning by which the rest depend, and the analogical term is predicated beforehand of the subject (called the principal analogate) of the principal meaning. With regard to the other subjects, called the secondary analogates, the analogical concept is predicated only posteriorly. The analogy of attribution involves the predication of a concept or term primarily to the

principal analogate, and its posterior attribution to the other subjects by derivation. Now, the analogy of attribution can either be extrinsic or intrinsic.

Extrinsic Analogy of Attribution. In this type of analogy of attribution only the principal analogate properly and formally possesses the analogical perfection; the secondary analogates possess it only in an extrinsic and improper manner. Take, for example, the term "health." Medicine is deemed "healthy" because it restores health. Climate is termed "healthy" because it is conducive to health. Food is termed "healthy" because it sustains health. Exercise is termed "healthy" because it promotes health, and complexion is said to be "healthy" because it indicates a healthy constitution. Medicine, climate, food, exercise, and complexion are said to be healthy only in an improper sense for they are the external causes of a healthy body.

Intrinsic Analogy of Attribution. This type of analogy is the most important as it is of capital importance in describing the relation between God and His creatures. In the intrinsic analogy of attribution the analogical concept is properly predicated not only of the principal analogate but also of the secondary analogates because the former really is the cause of the perfection of the latter. For example, we say that creatures "are" and God "Is" ; being is said principally of God, the Supreme Being, for His Being is His Essence. However, being is properly predicated of created beings inasmuch as they received their being from the Supreme Being. Creatures "have" being by participation, while God "Is" being. The fundamental basis of the intrinsic analogy of attribution is the relations of causality among beings. It is based on the imperfect similarity or likeness of the effect to its cause. Sanguineti gives us some observations regarding this point: "a) Since one cannot give what one does not have, at least some perfections of the efficient cause will necessarily be reflected in its proper effects. The efficient cause is, therefore, also an exemplary cause of its proper effects. It follows that by studying the latter, we can, using the analogy of attribution, arrive at some knowledge of the former. It is in this way that we arrive at an analogical knowledge of the nature of God on the basis of the manifold perfections we find in creatures; b) Consequently, analogy of attribution implies both *similarity* and *dissimilarity*. The analogical concept is predicated *per prius* of the cause, and *per posterius* of the effects. It is partly attributed to the effects inasmuch as they are similar to the cause ; but it is partly not attributed to them since they are also unlike the cause. Hence, the universe is, at one and the same time, like God and unlike Him; c) The foundation of the analogy of attribution is not an abstract idea but a real cause, the cause of the participated likenesses of the perfection in the secondary

analogates. For example, if being is common to God and the world, it is not because the abstract notion of being is found in both of them, but because the *being* of the world points to the *Being* of God as its principle and cause. It would be an error to establish the foundation of this analogical community of being on the most abstract concept of being-in-general (*esse comune*), which is necessarily univocal; d) The ontological priority of the principal analogate does not always mean gnoseological priority, for sometimes it is only through their effects that we acquire a knowledge of the causes. This is the case with our knowledge of God, the principal analogate of being. Though first in the ontological order, God comes after creatures in the noetical order since it is the latter that we first know and apply names to. In the order of knowledge, therefore, the meaning of our notions of *being*, *goodness* and *truth* applies primarily to creatures."[78][78]

To sum up, when we say that "God is *Being*" and that "man is a *being*", *being* here is predicated of their subjects analogically, not univocally as Parmenides taught. "If *being* were to be understood in a univocal manner, then all reality would be deemed to *be* in the same manner, which would ultimately lead to monism. Everything would be seen as identically one, and therefore, there would be no difference between God and creatures (pantheism). Taking into account the analogical notion of *being*, however, we can speak about God and creatures as beings, maintaining at the same time the infinite distance between them. By way of analogy, created *being* leads us to the knowledge of the divine *being* and its perfections. That is why this question is of utmost importance for metaphysics and theology."[79][79]

5.4. The Principle of Non-Contradiction

A *principle* is that from which something else proceeds. Self evident principles or understandings are called *first principles*. It is important to recognize that these first principles are first of all in reality before they are in the mind. We are capable of knowing them with an intuitive knowledge for we view them as they are in reality through intellectual insight and understanding. Among the ancient philosophers Aristotle had the profoundest grasp of what these principles were, but these principles are not the mere opinions of an Aristotle or a St. Thomas; rather, they form part of the common property of our human heritage. They are not the product of fantastic musings or idle speculation but are the result of a profound intellectual insight and

[78][78] J. J. SANGUINETI, *Logic*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, pp. 68-69.
[79][79] T. ALVIRA, L. CLAVELL, T. MELENDO, *Metaphysics*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, 1991, p. 31.

understanding into reality. Now, the first of these first principles is the principle of non-contradiction.[80][80]

As being is the first notion that our intelligence grasps, and which is implied in any consequent notion, there is also an intellectual judgment which comes naturally first and which is presupposed by all other consequent judgments: *"It is impossible to be and not be at the same time and in the same respect."* This first judgment is called the principle of non-contradiction for it expresses the most basic condition of things: that they cannot be self-contradictory. Such a principle is founded upon being and expresses the consistency of being and its opposition to non-being.

There are different ways of expressing this first principle. It is above all a judgment that concerns reality itself. Hence, the more profound formulations of the principle of non-contradiction are metaphysical in nature. For example, the Stagirite states in the fourth book of his *Metaphysics* that "it is impossible for one and the same thing to *be* and not to *be*,"[81][81] and further on, that "it is impossible for a thing to *be* and at the same time not to *be*."[82][82]

The principle of non-contradiction is the supreme law of reality and not just a simple postulate or axiom of our mind. But, since the mind of man is geared to know reality as such, it is, in a derivative way, the first and supreme

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[80][80] For more detailed studies of the principle of non-contradiction see: R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *Le sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques*, Beauchesne, Paris, 1909 ; J. H. NICOLAS, *L'intuition de l'être et le premier principe*, "Revue Thomiste," 47 (1947), pp. 113-134 ; A. MARCHESI, *Il principio di non contraddizione in Aristotele e in Kant e la funzione del "tempo,"* "Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica, 52 (1960), pp. 416-421 ; L. ELDERS, *Le premier principe de la vie intellective*, "Revue Thomiste," 62 (1962), pp. 571-586 ; E. BERTI, *Il principio di non contraddizione come criterio supremo di significanza nella metafisica aristotelica*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome, 1967 ; E. BERTI, *Il valore "teologico" del principio do non contraddizione nella metafisica aristotelica*, "Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica," 60 (1968), pp. 1-24 ; E. BERTI, *Sulla formulazione aristotelica del principio di non contraddizione*, "Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica, 61 (1969), pp. 9-16 ; P. C. COURTÈS, *Cohérence de lêtre et Premiere Principe selon Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, "Revue Thomiste," 70 (1970), pp. 387-423 ; M. CASULA, *La prova aristotelica del principio di contraddizione dal linguaggio*, "Giornale di Metafisica," 25 (1970), pp. 641-673 ; P. BEARSLEY, *Another Look at the First Principles of Knowledge*, "The Thomist," 36 (1972), pp. 566-598 ; E. WINANCE, *Les propositions évidentes*, "Revue Thomiste," 72 (1972), pp. 198-232 ; G. CENACCHI, *Il principio di non-contraddizione fondamento del discorso filosofico*, "Aquinas," 16 (1973), pp. 255-277 ; M. C. BARTOLOMEI, *Tomismo e principio di non contraddizione*, CEDAM, Padua, 1973 ; L. IAMMARRONE, *Tomismo e principio do non contraddizione (1)*, "Divus Thomas," 79 (1976), pp. 419-433 ; G. KALINOWSKI, *Le sens du discours métaphysique et les premiers principes*, "Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica," 68 (1976), pp. 3-19 ; L. CLAVELL, *Il primo principio della conoscenza intellettuale*, in Atti del VIII congresso tomistico nazionale (VII), Libreria Editrice Vaticano, Vatican City, 1982, pp. 62-73 ; F. A. SEDDON, *The Principle of Contradiction in "Metaphysics" Gamma*, Pittsburgh, 1988 ; M. J. DEGNAN, *Aristotle's Defence of the Principle of Non-Contradiction*, Minneapolis, 1990.

[81][81] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, IV, 3, 1005b 25.

[82][82] ARISTOTLE, *op. cit*., IV, 4, 1006a 3.

law of logic. Violate this supreme law one collapses into a state of mental anarchy. Since the first principle of reality is also the first principle of thought we are able to say that "we cannot both affirm and deny something of the same subject at the same time and in the same sense" as well as to say that "contradictory propositions about the same subject cannot be simultaneously true." The human mind is subject to the principle of non-contradiction: it cannot know *being* as self-contradictory precisely because *being* cannot be self-contradictory. If our mind attempts to deny this principle our reasoning falls into absurdities.

The principle of non-contradiction is not just an internal, subjective, law of logic but is based on reality itself. Kant taught that the first axiom principle of non-contradiction was at the foundation of all analytic judgments, and that this principle was itself an *a priori* analytic judgment that has nothing to do with synthetic judgments that are formed on the basis of experience. Consequently, he mistakenly held, against the realist position, that the principle of non-contradiction was valid only in the logical sphere, not in reality; it would only be a negative logical condition for correct thinking.[83][83] The transcendental "Thomist" J. Maréchal not only corrupted realism, adopting the Cartesian point of departure, but, following Kant, taught that the principle of non-contradiction was but the subject's expression of a subjective necessity. The prolific author Karl Rahner, a disciple of Kantian (and Heideggerian) thought and Marechal's transcendental "Thomism," also held that that the principle of non-contradiction was found only in the subjective order of our minds and not in the objective order of reality.[84][84]

Henri Bergson's (1859-1941) vitalist evolutionism also erroneously denies the objective validity of the principle of non-contradiction in the name of *becoming*. For him, there are no concrete individual things but rather actions, real being defined as not that which *is*, that which *exists*, but rather that which *becomes* and continuously is in flux. He writes: "There are no things, there are only acts; things and states are merely modes of thinking, which our mind derives from the idea of becoming."[85][85] Consequently, there can be no real distinction between "a glass of water, water, sugar, and the process by which sugar is dissolved in water."[86][86] Such reasoning is tantamount to affirming that a dog is a dog and no dog at all since it is in constant flux and therefore has no

[83][83] Cf. I. KANT, *Critique of Pure Reason*, I, 2, 2, 2, 1 (B 189 / A 150).
[84][84] K. RAHNER, *Geist in Welt*, p. 90, no. 27.
[85][85] H. BERGSON, *L'évolution créatrice*, 1907, p. 270.
[86][86] H. BERGSON, *op. cit*., pp. 10, 366.

proper nature. Everything would be in everything. Edouard Le Roy (1870-1954), a follower of Bergson, likewise denied the objective validity of the principle of non-contradiction in the name of becoming: "the principle of non-contradiction is not as universal and necessary as has been believed; its application is limited; it is restricted and circumscribed in meaning. Being the supreme law of speech, but not of thought in general, its influence extends merely to what is static, morcellated, immobile, in a word, to the things endowed with *identity*. But just as there is identity in the world, so also there is contradiction. Such are those fugitive fluxes, as becoming, duration, life, which of themselves are not of the rational order, and which speech transforms so as to incorporate them into contradictory schemata.[87][87] For Le Roy, our mind merely objectivates the universal becoming that is reality for the needs of speech and for the practical needs of everyday life; in such a way does the mind pretend to submit all that is real to the principle of non-contradiction. The consequences of this type of reasoning, this manner of violation of the principle of non-contradiction, in the field of morality is disastrous. Morality becomes immorality for there is no more a distinction between objective good and evil than there is a distinction between being and non-being. Jean Weber, himself of the Bergsonian school, gives us the moral consequences of accepting the views of Bergson and Le Roy: "Morality, in planting itself on a terrain from which invention grows in all its vigour, immediately and full of life; in manifesting itself as the most insolent encroachment of the realm of the intellect upon spontaneity, was fated to encounter the continual contradictions of that undeniable reality of dynamism and creation which is our activity…Confronted with these morals of ideas, we outline morality, or, more correctly, the unmorality of the act…We call 'good' whatever has triumphed. Success, provided it is fierce and implacable, provided the vanquished are completely defeated, destroyed, abolished beyond hope – success justifies everything…The man of genius is profoundly immoral, but for anyone to be immoral is not the proper thing…'Duty' is nowhere in particular, and yet it is everywhere, for all actions possess absolute value. The repentant sinner deserves all the anguish of his contrite soul, because he was not strong enough to transgress the law, and unworthy to be a sinner."[88][88]

The absolute idealist Hegel attempted to deny the objective reality of the principle of non-contradiction. Jean Weber, of the school of Bergson, sums up Hegel's denial of the objective validity of this principle in the name of the very idea of being: "Being is the most universal of all notions, but for this very

[87][87] E. LE ROY, in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 1905, pp. 200-204.
[88][88] J. WEBER, in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 1894, pp. 549-560.

reason it is also the poorest and the most negative of notions. To be white or black, to have extension, to be good, means to be something; but to be without any determination, is to be nothing, is simply not to be. *Pure and simple being is, therefore, equivalent to not-being*. It is at one and the same time itself and its contrary. If it were merely itself, it would remain immobile and sterile; if it were mere nothingness, it would be synonymous with zero, and in this case also completely powerless and infecund. It is because it is the one and the other that it *becomes* something, another thing, everything. The contradiction contained in the notion of being resolves itself into *becoming*, development. *To become* is at the same time *to be* and *not to be* (that which will be). The two contraries which engender it, namely, being and non-being, are rediscovered, blended and reconciled in *becoming*. The result is a new contradiction, which will resolve itself into a new synthesis, and thus the process will continue until the absolute idea is reached."[89][89] Garrigou-Lagrange objects to such reasoning, writing: "To perceive the sophism contained in this argument, we need only to cast it into syllogistic form: Pure being is pure indetermination. But pure indetermination is pure non-being. Therefore, pure being is pure non-being. The middle term, 'pure indetermination,' is used in two different senses. In the major it means the negation of all determination, generic, specific, or individual, but not the negation of (ideal or real) being, which transcends the generic determinations of which it is susceptible. In the minor, on the other hand, pure indetermination is not only the negation of all generic, specific, and individual determination, but also implies the negation of any further determination of which being is capable. Therefore, the argument amounts to this: that pure being is undetermined being; but undetermined being is pure non-being. The minor is evidently false."[90][90] Garrigou-Lagrange also adds: "Besides, there is no apparent reason why *becoming* should emerge from this realized contradiction, this identification of contradictories. On the contrary, we must hold with Aristotle that 'to maintain that being and non-being are identical, is to admit permanent repose rather than perpetual motion. There is in fact nothing into which beings can transform themselves, because everything includes everything"(IV *Metaph*., c. v).[91][91]

Frederick Wilhelmsen explains that Hegel's panlogicism was a serious attempt to deny the objective validity of the principle of non-contradiction: "Hegel identified the orders of thought and existence. Being functions the way

[89][89] As quoted in R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *God: His Existence and Nature*, vol. 1, B. Herder, London, 1946, pp. 173-174. Cf. G. NOEL, *La Logique de Hegel*, Paris 1897, pp. 23-52, 135-159.
[90][90] R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *op. cit*., p. 174. Cf. T. M. ZIGLIARA, *Summa philosophica in usum scholarum*, vol. 1, *Critica*, Rome, 1876, pp. 247-252.
[91][91] R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

thinking functions, taught Hegel, because being is a 'concretization' of absolute spirit. In thought, said Hegel, every proposition has its contradictory. Posit any judgment and you thereby posit its opposite. On this point, Hegel merely repeated a truth known to logicians since the time of Plato. Aristotle systematised this law of the mind in his well-known Square of Opposition: The proposition 'every cow is black' is contradicted by 'some cow is not black'; 'no academician is a fool' is contradicted by 'some academician is a fool,' and so forth. Hegel pushed this opposition of judgments to the order of being itself. 'Being is being' is contradicted by 'being is not-being.' Given the first proposition, the second automatically follows. Therefore being contradicts itself, and this contradiction is the most fundamental law of the spirit. If we grant Hegel's identification of spirit and reality, his position makes good sense. It was the only way he could account for progress in the universe, for change. If the real is basically the same thing as the rational, one of two conclusions follow: either the real is given once and for all or it is not. If we grant the first supposition, we must conclude – with Hegel – that spirit never gets anywhere at all; spirit does nothing but analytically dissect an order already given at the outset, an order of ideas and laws to which nothing new is ever added. Refuse the first supposition because of the fact of change in the world and it follows that reality could only advance by contradicting itself. Begin with a given – call it A – and assume that only A is given. How do we get from A to B, when B is not given? We move from A to B only if A contradicts itself. Fundamentally, B is nothing but A's negation of itself; B is non-A. In this fashion we can move from one point in the real order to another. We can account for change, for the advance of spirit. If we refuse Hegel's identification of spirit and reality, if we judge his position in the light of realism, we can easily see that his error consisted in treating the metaphysical order, the real order, as though it were the logical. But the whole point about being, in reality, is that *it is being*. The contradictory to being, not in the order of ideas but in the order of things, would *be* non-being. But in reality there is no such 'thing' as an existing non-being. A man does not need an armory full of logical and dialectical weapons to understand this; all he needs is some existing thing which he can contemplate for a short time. Concentrate for a moment on the piece of paper before your eyes; formulate the proposition, 'the paper exists'; now contradict the first proposition with 'the paper does not exist.' The two judgments contradict each other in the logical order, in your mind. The contradiction exists mentally because the two judgments can be entertained as logical opposites. Now return your attention to the piece of paper itself, not as it exists in a proposition in your mind, but as it is in itself. What is the contradictory of the existence of the paper in the order of being? In that order, the order of things as they exist beyond your

thinking of them, there simply is *no contradictory* to the piece of paper. The non-existence of the paper that exists is a metaphysical zero. To see this is to see that Hegel confused the two orders."[92][92]

For Garrigou-Lagrange, "this absolute intellectualism of Hegel is no less destructive of all knowledge than is the anti-intellectualism of Heraclitus and Bergson. All reasoning presupposes that every idea employed in the process represents a reality, the nature of which remains *the same*; but for Hegel, the principle of identity (non-contradiction) is merely a law of inferior logic, of the mind working with abstractions, and not a law of superior logic, of reason and reality. 'From this it follows,' as Aristotle remarked (IV *Metaphy*., c. iv), 'that one can with equal right affirm or deny everything of all things, that all men tell the truth and that all lie, and that each one admits that he is a liar.' For the rest, Hegel himself acknowledges 'that if it is true to say that *being* and *non-being* are one and the same, it is also true to say that they differ, and that the one is not the other.'[93][93] It follows from this that, according to Hegel, nothing can be affirmed and everything can be affirmed. If this attitude does not destroy all science, it cannot at least be said to have more than a relative value, and hence to possess nothing more than the name of science."[94][94]

For Hegel, reality is not grasped in its concreteness, in its substantiality. Rather, substance and essence is negated in favor of contradiction and becoming. The fundamental principle of the Hegelian dialectic is that the essence of being is contradiction. For him, the antinomical dialecticism of contradiction is not something by which change is realized in a substance, respecting of course, the concrete individuality of substance, nor is it a simple function or law of thought; rather, it is the very essence of reality itself and also of thought itself. Hegel doesn't just make the dialectic a law of thought but is in fact a metaphysical principle of reality. He identifies metaphysics with logic and makes logic metaphysics itself. Each thing – a dog, rat, a cow, for example – is *and is not* itself ; it fact, its true being is becoming.

Neo-Positivists dimiss the principle of non-contradiction holding that this principle cannot be approved by the principle of verification which states that all meaningful propositions must be verifiable in sense experience. Thus, the principle of non-contradiction would be, in their eyes, meaningless. The

[92][92] F. WILHELMSEN, *Man's Knowledge of Reality*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1956, pp. 47-49.
[93][93] G. W. F. HEGEL, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, volume 1, Stuttgart, p. 404.
[94][94] R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *op. cit*., pp. 174-175.

problem with the principle of verification is that it too cannot be verified in sense experience, it being a metaphysical principle transcending sense knowledge.

In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle replies to those who would be so foolish as to negate the principle of non-contradiction writing that "in order to deny this principle, one has to reject all meaning in language. If 'man' were the same as 'non-man', it would not, in fact, mean anything at all. Any word would signify all things and would not, therefore, denote anything; everything would be the same. Consequently, all communication or understanding between persons would be impossible. Thus, whenever anyone says a word, he is already acknowledging the principle of non-contradiction, since he undoubtedly wants the word to mean something definite and distinct from its opposite. Otherwise, he would not even speak….Anyone who rejects this first principle should behave like a plant, since even animals move in order to attain an objective which they prefer over others, as when they seek food."[95][95] "Besides, denying this principle in fact implies accepting it, since in rejecting it, a person acknowledges that affirming and denying are not the same. If a person maintains that the principle of non-contradiction is false, he already admits that being true and being false are not the same, thereby accepting the very principle he wishes to eliminate."[96][96]

The principle of non-contradiction is naturally and spontaneously known by all men through experience and is a self-evident to all. Since it is the first judgment, this first principle cannot be demonstrated by means of other truths prior to it. When a truth is self-evident, it is neither necessary nor possible to prove it; only something which is not immediately evident requires proof. That the principle of non-contradiction is not demonstrable because of its self-evidence is not a sign of its imperfection; rather it is a sign of its perfection.

Garrigou-Lagrange summarizes for us Aristotle's eight principal reasons for defending the necessity and objective validity of the principle of non-contradiction: "(1) to deny this necessity and this validity would be to deprive words of their fixed meaning and to render speech useless; (2) all idea of the reality of an essence, or thing or substance as such, would have to be abandoned; there would be only a becoming without anything which is on the way of becoming; it would be like saying that there can be a flux without a fluid, a flight without a bird, a dream without a dreamer; (3) there would no

[95][95] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, IV, 4.
[96][96] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, XI, 5.

longer be any *distinction between things*, between a galley, a wall, and a man; (4) it would mean the *destruction of all truth*, for truth follows being; (5) it would *destroy all thought, even all opinion*; for its very affirmation would be a negation. It would not be an opinion which Heraclitus had when he affirmed that contradictories were true at the same time; (6) it would mean the destruction of all desire and all hatred; there would be only absolute indifference, for there would be no distinction between good and evil; there would be no reason why we should act; (7) it would no longer be possible to distinguish degrees of error, everything would be equally false and true at the same time; (8) it would put an end to the very notion of becoming; for there would be no distinction between the beginning and the end of a movement; the first would already be the second, and any transition from one state to another would be impossible. Moreover, 'becoming' could not be explained by any of the four causes. There would be no subject of becoming; the process would be without any efficient or final cause, and without specification, and it would be both attraction and repulsion, concretion as well as fusion."[97][97]

5.5. Substance and Accidents

We initially arrive at a knowledge of substance from the observation of accidental changes in nature. A father's face, for example, gets red because his son bumped his favorite car. The passage from the father's originally white face to a red face to a white face again does not obviously destroy the individual being that is the father. He doesn't turn into a frog or into a chair. Therefore, this accidental modification that he undergoes without destroying his being an individual man reveals a substratum that remains in essence the same throughout the accidental changes. There is revealed, in the accidental alteration that we have observed, a stable, permanent substantial core, called the substance,[98][98] and certain secondary changeable perfections, called the accidents.

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[97][97] R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *op. cit*., p. 168.

[98][98] For in-depth studies on substance, see: R. JOLIVET, *La notion de substance*, (Essai historique et critique sur le développement des doctrines d'Aristote nos jours), Beauchesne, Paris, 1929 ; F. S. MOSELEY, *The Restoration of the Concept of Substance to Science*, "The New Scholasticism," 1936, pp. 1-17 ; R. MARKUS, *Substance, Cause, and Cognition in Thomist Thought*, "The New Scholasticism," 1947, pp. 438-448 ; A. FOREST, *La structure métaphysique du concret selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Vrin, Paris, 1956 ; R. J. McCALL, *The Reality of Substance*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1956 ; T. E. EVERSON, *Separability and Substance in Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Baltimore, 1973 ; J. E. ROBERTSON, *The Distinction Between Substance and Non-Substance in Aristotle's "Metaphysics,"* Texas, 1975 ; A. GRAESER, *Aristoteles und das Problem von Substantialität und Sein*, "Freiburger Zeitschr. Für Phil. u. Theol.," 25 (1978), p. 120 s ; E. H. GRANGER, *A Problem in Aristotle's Ontology. Substance as Both Simple and Complex*, Austin, Texas, 1977 ; C. SEAD, *Divine Substance*, Oxford, 1977 ; R. HEINAMAN, *Substance and Knowledge of Substance in Aristotle's "Metaphysics,"* Princeton, 1978 ; J. M. LOUX, *Substance and Attribute. A Study in*

5.5.1. Substance

Like being, substance cannot be strictly defined. But substance may be broadly defined as *that reality to whose essence or nature it is proper to be by itself and not in another subject*. Now, since the substance is the core of a thing that weathers the various accidental modifications, it is the most important element in each thing. There are two basic aspects of substance: 1. The substance is the *substratum*, the subject, that supports the accidents; and 2. Substance is something subsistent. This means that it does not exist in something else but is by itself, not needing to inhere in another like the accidents do. A dog, for example, is a substance since it subsists, having its own being distinct from the being of anything else. The brownness of the dog, however, doesn't subsist in itself but needs to inhere in a subject. We say "This brown dog." The broad definition of substance is taken from this second fundamental aspect of substance. Psychologically, substance as the "substratum of the accidents" is prior to substance as "something whose nature or essence it is to be by itself and not in another subject." That is, we initially arrive at a knowledge of the substance through its function of supporting the accidents. However, metaphysically or ontologically, that is, in the order of reality, substance as "something whose nature or essence it is to be by itself and not in another subject" is prior to substance as the "support of the accidents," because in order for substance to act as the support of the accidents it must first of all "be by itself and not in another subject," that is, it must be capable of supporting itself. If substance is capable of having an essence or nature to be by itself and not in another it will be capable of supporting the accidents. Being capable of supporting the accidents is a property of the substance whose real nature or essence is to be by itself and not in another subject. This is why the broad definition of substance is taken from the second of our aspects of substance.

Ontology, "Philosophical Studies," Series in Philosophy 14, Dordrecht-Boston, London, 1978 ; D. A. MILLER, *Aristotle on Sensible Substance*, Rochester, 1979 ; L. DEWAN, Laurence Foss and the Existence of Substances, "Laval théologique et philosophique," 44 (1988), pp. 77-84 ; J. F. WIPPEL, *Thomas Aquinas on Substance as a Cause of Proper Accidents*, in Philosophie Im Mittelalter: Entwicklungslinien und Paradigmen, (edited by J. Beckmann et al.), Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1987, pp. 201-212 ; J. F. WIPPEL, *Thomas Aquinas on Substance as a Cause of Proper Accidents*, in Philosophie Im Mittelalter: Entwicklungslinien und Paradigmen, (edited by J. Beckmann et al.), Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, 1987, pp. 201-212 ; J. F. WIPPEL, *Substance in Aquinas' Metaphysics*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 61 (1987), pp. 2-16 ; R. MASIELLO, *A Note on Substance and* Quod Quid Erat Esse *According to St. Thomas*, "Doctor Communis", 40 (1987), pp. 285-288 ; M. L. GILL, *Aristotle on Substance*, Princeton, N.J., 1989 ; F. A. LEWIS, *Substance and Predication in Aristotle*, Cambridge-New York, 1991 ; L. DEWAN, *The Importance of Substance*, Jacques Maritain Center: Thomistic Institute, Indiana, 1997.

5.5.2. Accidents

An accident is defined as *that reality to whose essence it is proper to be in something else, as in its subject*. If what is most characteristic of the substance is to be by itself and not in another, that which is most characteristic of accidents is to be in another, that is, to be in the substance. Take for example a cat. The substance here would be the substance cat, while its accidents would be the various perfections inhering in the substance cat (a substance that, though modified by its accidents, nevertheless remains in essence or nature unchanged), accidents such as its shape, size, colour, fluffiness of its fur, etc.

It is to be observed that the definition of accident includes the subject. The nature of the accident is to demand inherence in another. As the substance has a nature or essence to which subsistence is fitting, and which situates the subject within a determinate species, accidents also have their own essence by which they are differentiated from each other, and to which dependence on the being of their subjects is fitting. The essences of accidents are naturally imperfect for they demand the support of their subjects.[99][99] Rather than simply being, an accident is said to be something belonging to being.[100][100] Accidents cannot be said to "become" or be corrupted; rather it is the subject that becomes through the accidents.[101][101] It is for this reason that an accident cannot be defined without the subject as a quasi-part of the definition.[102][102] "No matter how we take an accident, its very notion implies dependence on a subject but in different ways. For if we take an accident in the abstract, it implies relation to a subject, which relation begins in the accident and terminates in the subject: for whiteness is that whereby a thing is white. Accordingly, in defining an accident in the abstract, we do not put the subject as though it were the first part of the definition, viz., the genus; but we give it the second place which is that of the difference: thus we say snubnosedness is a curvature of the nose. But if we take accidents in the concrete, the relation begins in the subject and terminates at the accident: for a white thing is something that has whiteness. Accordingly, in defining this kind of accident, we place the subject as the genus, which is the first part of the definition; for we say that a snubnose is a curved nose."[103][103]

5.5.3. Threefold Relation Between Substance and Accidents

[99][99] Cf. *In I Sent*., d. 8, q. 4, a. 3.
[100][100] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 110, a. 2, ad 3.
[101][101] Cf. *Ibid*.
[102][102] Cf. *De Ente et Essentia* ch. 7.
[103][103] *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 53, a. 2, ad 3.

There is a three-fold relation between substance and accidents[104[104]]: 1. The substance is the *substratum* or the subject of the accidents, the "subject" here the bearer and that which underlies, and it indicates the metaphysical dependence of all the accidents on the substance. The substance is also the *substratum* of the accidents inasmuch as it gives them the act of being (*esse*); 2. The substance is to accident what potency is to act, because the accidents perfect the substance. The substance has a potency or passive capacity to receive further perfections conferred to it by its accidents, called accidental forms. For example, the operations of acts of free will are accidents which are a kind of perfection to which a substance is in potency; and 3. The substance is related to the accident as cause is to effect. The substance is the cause of the accidents which arise from it and the accidents come into being because of the substance.

5.5.4. The Real Distinction Between Substance and Accidents

There is a real distinction between a substance and its accidents, as is seen when observing accidental changes. Observing such accidental changes in the substance, we find that certain secondary perfections disappear and give rise to new ones without a substantial change in the subject. And such accidental alterations can only be possible if these accidents are really distinct from the substance they affect. All the nine accidents are, by their very essences, distinct from their subject. The substance is really distinct from the accidents, being superior to them, for it is the substance that determines the very content of things, making them to be what they are, whereas the accidents must depend entirely upon the substance, their substratum, for their very being.

5.5.5. The Act of Being Properly Belongs to the Substance

The act of being (*esse*) properly belongs to the subject of the accidents which is the substance. Accidents also are, but are by reason of the act of being that belongs to the substance. It is only the substance that is in the proper sense of the term. To say that accidents have an act of being of their own, as Suarez did, would undermine the unity of the substance-accidents composite (that is one substance and one substance only having its own accidents). We should also be reminded that the substance is being (*ens*) in the strict sense. Accidents are only by reason of being supported by its substratum or support which is the

[104[104]] Cf. *De virtutibus in communi*, q. 1, a. 3.

substance. Thus, it is only the substance that should properly be called being; accidents instead are something belonging to a being (*ens*).

5.5.6. The Unity of the Substance-Accidents Composite

Accidents depend entirely on the substance for their being, for they do not have *esse* of their own but are because of the act of being of the substance. The real distinction between substance and accidents and their inequality does not in any way undermine the radical unity of the substance-accident composite of being (*ens*). The real distinction cannot destroy the unity of *ens* for a substance and its accidents are not many beings mixed up together to form a whole; rather, there is only one being in the strict sense, which is the substance, and all of the accidents of this particular substance "belong to it," receiving their very being from the substance without which they would cease to exist. Accidents cannot be autonomous realities separated from substance; they are rather the determining aspects of a substance, perfecting and completing it.

5.5.7. Knowledge of Substance and Accidents

We arrive at a knowledge of the substance-accidents composite by means of our intellect, initially through the information provided it by our senses. Our senses are only able to grasp the accidents of things, and this data is passed over to the intellect which arrives at its source and basis, which is the substance, again by means of the accidents. It is only the intellect that is capable of grasping the nature of the thing, its essence. In the process of knowing a thing composed of substance and accidents we employ a constant going back and forth from accidents to substance and from substance back to the accidents: 1. In the beginning we have a vague knowledge of the composite of substance and accidents. When we are in the forest for example and see a large being approaching at a distance, its nature unknown to us, we know that the various qualities perceived by our senses, for example, the colour, size and shape, of the being, are not independent realities existing in themselves but rather belong to a single substance, the being approaching at a distance. Even at this initial stage of the knowledge process we already perceive that the various accidents are but secondary manifestations belonging to a single individual substance that subsists by itself, even though we are unable as yet to determine the exact nature or essence of this substance. It should be recalled that being (*ens*) is the first thing that is grasped by the intellect, and since substance is being in the strict sense, we cannot perceive accidents without at the same time perceiving the subject or substance in which these accidents inhere in; 2. From the

perception of the accidents by the senses we move now to a knowledge of the nature of the substance. The accidents do not hide the substance; rather, they reveal it. The accidents of the bear approaching at a distance, reveal the nature or essence of the bear. Thus, through external manifestations we arrive at a knowledge of the substantial core of the subject in question; 3. Then, from the substance we go back to the accidents. Having arrived at a knowledge of the nature of the thing perceived, in this case, our approaching bear, this new knowledge gives us much more insight into the other accidents of the animal in question as well as their mutual relationships. Knowing the essence or nature of bears, man knows that bears can at times, when provoked, or when protecting its young in the vicinity, attack humans in a ferocious manner, and thus he adjusts his behaviour accordingly to the situation.

5.6. The Categories

The categories[105][105] (also called the predicaments), are the supreme modes of being, divided into substantial being and accidental being. The supreme genera of the categories are composed of the substance and the nine accidents, namely: quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, time (when?), place (where?), position (*situs*), and possession (*habitus*). Some brief examples of each of the ten categories will very helpful in gaining a knowledge of these supreme classes of being which, though like being cannot be strictly defined, can rather be described and illustrated with examples. Here are the following examples: "Mark is a man" (substance); "Mark is tall and weighs 200 pounds" (quantity); "Mark is healthy and intelligent" (quality); "Mark is the son of Joe" (relation); "Mark is pushing the chair" (action); "Mark is being slapped around by his father" (passion); "Mark arrived at his house at seven in the evening" (time or when?); "Mark is in Los Angeles" (place or where?); "Mark is sitting down" (position or *situs*); "Mark is wearing a formal suit and tie" (possession or *habitus*). It should be noted that accidents have essences of their own (essence here is understood in the broad sense as referring to both the nature of substances and accidents).

5.6.1. A Brief Description of Each of the Accidents

[105][105] For in-depth studies regarding the categories, see: M. SCHEU, *The Categories of Being According to Aristotle and St. Thomas*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D. C., 1944 ; L. M. DE RIJK, *The Place of the Categories of Being in Aristotle's Philosophy*, Assen, 1952 ; C. NEGRO, *La dottrina delle categorie nell'omonimo trattato aristotelico*, Pavia, 1952 ; L. LUGARINI, *Il problema della categorie in Aristotele*, "Acme," 8 (1955), pp. 1-109 ; A. TRENDELENBURG, *Historische Beiträge zur Philosophie, I. Geschichte der Kategorienlehre*, Olms, Heldesheim, 1963.

1. *Quantity*. This accident pertains to everything corporeal, that is, all material beings have a definite quantity, and it arises from the determinable element in the hylemorphic composite, namely the matter. Quantity is the spatial extension of a corporeal substance. Examples of quantity include weight and size. It asks, in terms of measurement, how big or little, and how much. Here are some examples of indications of quantity: "The building *is a thousand feet tall*"; "The truck *weighs fifteen tons*"; "The *map is eight by eleven*." All these predicates indicate various quantities.

2. *Quality*. This important accident will be explained shortly.

3. *Relation*. This accident will likewise be explained shortly.

4. *Action*. This accident arises in the substance insofar as it is the efficient or agent principle of change or motion in another subject. Action is indicated in the following: "The dog is gnawing a bone"; "The waiter is pushing the refrigerator"; "The electrician is cleaning the airconditioner."

5. *Passion*. This accident arises in substances insofar as they are the passive subjects of the activity of others. It is the reception of the effect from another, in the sense of suffering, bearing, enduring, receiving, and being acted on. In language it is expressed by the passive voice of the transitive verb. Examples of substances undergoing passion: "Joel was shot in the back"; "Betty endured her ordeal in the mountains." Passion answers the question, "What is happening to it."

6. *Time* (*or When?*). This accident regards the temporal situation of a corporeal substance or of an event with reference to what precedes and what follows. Time or *when?* is indicated using such expressions as: "Joel took his exam *today*"; "Joel has an appointment *at five o'clock*"; "Joel will go to the restaurant *after classes*"; "Joel had the accident *ten years ago*"; "Joel's father was born *in the year 1964*."

7. *Place* (*or Where?*). This accident regards the localization of the substance, that is, it is the accident which arises in a corporeal substance because of its being here or there. It deals with the position of a body in space, with reference to other bodies. Some examples: "Gerard is in New York"; "Gerard is at that street-corner"; "Gerard is at that Chinese restaurant"; "Gerard is outside the country."

8. *Position* (*or Situs*). Position regards the corporeal substance's way of being in a place, like for instance, "Gerry is standing up," "Gerry is squating," "Gerry is sitting down." This accident indicates the relative position of parts of the same corporeal substance. It is different from the accident place or *where?* for it refers to the relative internal arrangement of the various parts of the localized bodily being. Thus, a body can be in different positions at the same place.

9. *Possession* (*or Habitus*). Possession refers to the external adjuncts of a body. It is a special accident expressive of material and external things immediately adjacent to the subject. Some examples: "John is wearing his formal suit and tie"; "John is wearing his Cartier watch"; "John is wearing his leather shoes." Only humans are capable, in the strict sense, of possessing things, and so this accident properly belongs to the human species alone.

5.6.2. An Ordering Among Accidents

Though it is the substance that is the subject of the accidents, an accident can be called the subject of another insofar as the latter inheres or resides in the substance through the former. For example, color, which is a quality, affects the bodily substance only insofar as the substance is endowed with quantity; a substance without quantity simply cannot be colored. Another ordering among accidents: an accident can be in potency with respect to another accident. For example, a substance which has the accident quantity is in potency to be in a place other than where it currently is. At first the substance and its accident quantity is actually in a certain place, but is also potentially in another place. If it proceeds to that other place, then it is actually in that place, and not just in potency to be in that place. Lastly, certain accidents can be considered to be the causes of other accidents. For example, the action of the conjugal act (an accident) is the action by which husband and wife generate a son or daughter which gives rise to the relations of paternity and filiation between parents and offspring. Another example: having the virtue of fortitude (an accident) gives rise to, or is the cause of, brave actions (accidents) in a person (substance). It is to be noted that as regards a corporeal substance, quantity is its first accident since all other accidents such as quality, action, passion, and so forth, are rooted in the substance by means of its quantity. We will not treat of quantity in detail since that properly falls within the scope of philosophy of inanimate nature (cosmology). Metaphysics, instead, examines in detail the accidents quality and relation, as they apply to both corporeal and incorporeal substances, and it is the

fitting task of metaphysics to deal with the ultimate causes and first principles of all things, corporeal and incorporeal.

5.6.3. Quality

The accident quality intrinsically affects the substance in itself, making it to be in one way or another. It arises from the form of things and is found in both corporeal and incorporeal beings. It is the most inclusive of accidents, having the widest scope, meaning, and application. Quality indicates what sort or kind a thing is. It modifies or influences a substance in itself or in its activities. In language, most adjectives express qualities. It makes the substance which it affects either better or worse, or makes it function more easily or less easily. Qualities have their opposites and can be listed in opposite pairs, like knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice, and health and illness. They are also susceptible to degrees, capable of being increased or diminished in intensity.

5.6.4. Kinds of Qualities

Qualities are reduced to the following four groups: alterable qualities, shape and figure, operative powers or faculties, and habits.

1. *Alterable Qualities* (also called passive qualities or characteristics). These qualities affect a physical change in a substance. Alterable qualities include temperature, color and humidity. The rise in temperature of water from cold to hot, for example, affects the water physically.

2. *Shape and Figure*. These qualities of corporeal bodies define the limits of quantity, giving it definite dimensions and contours.

3. *Operative Powers*. These qualities are also called operative faculties or potencies. They are qualities which enable the subject to carry out certain acts like thinking, willing, walking, etc. They include, for example, the intelligence and will in man, and the power of locomotion in both man and animal.

4. *Habits*. These are stable qualities by which a subject is either well or ill-disposed with regard to a certain perfection befitting its nature (entitative habits) or its action or goal (operative habits). Habits are divided into entitative habits (like the habits of health or sickness) and operative habits (like virtues or vices).

5.6.5. Relation

Relation[106][106] is that accident whose nature is a reference or order of one substance towards another. It is that reference of one being towards another being, the order that a being has with respect to other beings distinct from it. Examples of relations include paternity, sonship and filiation. Paternity, for example, is the accident that links father to son. Although it is based on the fact that the father gave life to his son, paternity is itself no more than a mere relation or reference which does not intrinsically add a new characteristic or property to the father's substance. Relations can either be real relations or relations of reason (logical relations). For example, the relation between subject and predicate in a proposition is a logical relation. Real relations, on the other hand, refer to relations in extra-mental reality. The elements of a real relation are the following: 1. the *subject*, which is the person or thing in which the relation resides; 2. the *term* (*terminus*), to which the subject is related; 3. the *basis* of the order between the subject and the terminus; and 4. the *relation itself*, or the bond linking one thing to another. In the case of sonship, for example, the subject is the son, the *terminus* will be the father and mother (parents), the basis would be generation (what causes the son to be related to his parents is their having begotten him), and the relation itself would be sonship.

5.7. Act and Potency

We arrive at an initial knowledge of the doctrine of act and potency[107][107] through the observation of change or motion. Though Parmenides was the first

[106][106] For in-depth studies on relation, see: N. D. GINSBURG, *Metaphysical Relations and St. Thomas Aquinas*, "The New Scholasticism," 1941, pp. 238-254 ; C. G. KOSSEL, *Principles of St. Thomas' Distinction Between the* Esse *and* Ratio *of Relation*, The Modern Schoolman," 1945-46, pp. 19-36, 93-107 ; C. G. KOSSEL, *St. Thomas' Theory of the Causes of Relation*, "The Modern Schoolman," 1945-1946, pp. 151-172 ; S. BRETON, *L'"esse in" et l'"esse ad" dans la métaphisique de la relation*, Angelicum, Rome, 1951 ; A. KREMPEL, *La doctrine de la relation chez St. Thomas d'Aquin*, Vrin, Paris, 1952.

[107][107] For in-depth studies regarding act and potency, see: A. FARGES, *Theorie fondamentale de l'acte et de la puissance du moteur et du mobile*, Paris, 1893 ; A. BAUDIN, *L'acte et la puissance dans Aristote*, "Revue Thomiste," 7 (1899), pp. 39-62, 153-172, 274-296, 584-608 ; G. MATTIUSSI, *Le XXIV tesi della filosofia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino*, Gregorian University, Rome, 1925 ; G. MANSER, *Das Wesen des Thomismus. Die Lehre von Akt und Potenz als tiefste Grundlage der thomistischen Synthese*, Paulus Verlag, Fribourg, 1935 ; P. DESCOQS, *Sur la division de l'être en acte et puissance d'après Saint Thomas*, "Revue de Philosophie," 38 (1938), pp. 410-430 ; V. A. BERTO, *Sur la composition d'acte et de puissance dans les créatures*, "Revue de Philosophie," 39 (1939), pp. 106-121 ; P. DESCOQS, *Sur la division de lêtre en acte et puissance d'après Saint Thomas. Nouvelles precisions*, "Revue de Philosophie," 39 (1939), pp. 233-252, 361-70 ; C. FABRO, *Circa la divisione dell'essere in atto e potenza secondo S. Tommaso*, "Divus Thomas," 42 (1939), pp. 529-552 ; A. SANDOZ, *Sur la division de lêtre en acte et puissance d'après Saint Thomas*, "Revue de Philosophie," 40 (1940), pp. 53-76 ; VAN ROO, W. A., *Act and Potency*, "The Modern Schoolman", 18 (1940), pp. 1-4 ; C. GIACON, *Atto e potenza*, La Scuola, Brescia, 1947 ; J. D. ROBERT, *Le principe: 'Actus non limitatur nisi per potentiam subjectivam realiter distinctam,'* "Revue philosophique de Louvain," 47 (1949), pp. 44-70 ; W.

formulator of the principle of non-contradiction (though Aristotle and Aquinas later perfected this formulation) he, nevertheless, denied the possibility of motion or change in the world, adopting a monistic position. Aristotle found a solution to this error with his doctrine of act and potency. The change or motion that we see around us is definitely real; it is the passage from being in potency to being in actuality. It is the successive actualization of the potency. For example, hot water is in a state of actuality and cold water is in a state of potentiality towards being hot water. When water is heated with fire it slowly starts to boil. This process of water being heated is a transition from cold water (the state of potentiality) to hot water (the state of actuality). What is formerly in potency undergoes a successive actualization of the potency towards a state of actuality (in hot water).

Potency is the capacity to have a perfection while act is the perfection which a subject possesses. Act is contrasted to potency which is the potentiality to receive the perfection or act. Potency and act are directly known through experience as correlative to each other. In the case of potency its very constitution is to be directed towards some type of act. Because they are primary and evident notions, they cannot be strictly defined but only described by means of examples and by contrasting these notions with one another.

Act and potency should be considered under two aspects, namely, the physical (which is linked to change or motion), and the metaphysical. Regarding the physical aspect, act and potency form the elements that make change or motion understandable. Here, what is actual cannot be at the same time potential and vice versa. Hot water cannot be cold water at the same time and in the same respect. Change is the *transition* between being in potentiality and being in actuality.

NORRIS CLARK, *The Limitation of Act by Potency: Aristotelianism or Neoplatonism?*, "The New Scholasticism," 26 (1952), pp. 167-194 ; E. BERTI, *Genesi e sviluppo della dottrina della potenza e dell'atto in Aristotele*, "Studia Patavina," 5 (1958), pp. 477-505 ; C. FABRO, *La determinazione dell'atto nella metafisica tomistica*, in *Esegesi tomistica*, Pontificia Università Lateranense, Rome, 1969, pp. 329-350 ; H. P. KAINZ, *Active and Passive Potency in Thomistic Angelology*, M. Nijhoff, The Hague, 1972 ; C. A. FREELAND, *Aristotle's Theory of Actuality and Potentiality*, Pittsburgh, 1979 ; F. KOVACH, *St. Thomas Aquinas: Limitation of Potency by Act. A Textual and Doctrinal Analysis*, in *Atti del VIII Congresso Internazionale dell'Accademia Pontificia di San Tommaso d'Aquino (V),* Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1982, pp. 387-411 ; G. VERBEKE, *The Meaning of Potency in Aristotle*, in *Graceful Reason. Essays in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Presented to Joseph Owens CssR*, edited by L. P. Gerson, Toronto, 1983, pp. 55-74 ; J. F. WIPPEL, *Thomas Aquinas and the Axiom 'What is Received is Received according to the Mode of the Receiver*, in *A Straight Path: Essays Offered to Arthur Hyman*, edited by Ruth Link Salinger, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D. C., 1988, pp. 279-289 ; J. F. WIPPEL, *Thomas Aquinas and the Axiom that Unreceived Act is Unlimited*, "The Review of Metaphysics," 51 (1998), pp. 533-564.

Regarding the metaphysical aspect, act and potency form the stable constituent principles of all things (finite things, that is, which excludes God who is Pure Act without any admixture of potentiality whatsoever), so much so that the potency, even after having been made actual, continues to be a co-principle of its corresponding act. In all material beings, which are hylemorphic composites of prime matter (potency) and substantial form (act), prime matter remains even after reception of its form.

Potency is that which can receive an act or already has it. This statement implies a number of things: 1. that potency is distinct from act; 2. that act and potency are not complete realities but rather principles or aspects found in things; 3. that potency is to act as the imperfect is to the perfect; and 4. that in itself potency is not a mere privation of act but is a real capacity for perfection.

1. *Potency is Distinct from Act*. This can be shown when act is viewed as separated from its corresponding potency. For example, the exterior sense of taste sometimes is tasting and at other times is not. Yet no one doubts that man has the potency or power for tasting. The exterior sense of sight is sometimes seeing and other times is not, yet men have the potentiality or capacity to see. A person may at times be walking, and at other times he may be at rest, yet he still has the potentiality or capacity to walk. These various potencies of man may not be currently in use, that is, they may not be actualized, but they still remain potencies. Thus, potency is characterized as being the capacity to have an act or by being a receptive subject, and is therefore distinct from act.

2. *Act and Potency are Not Complete Realities but Rather Principles or Aspects Found in Things*. Act and potency are the distinct co-principles of a thing. Act is not a subsistent being and potency is not a subsistent being; rather, they are principles of a created thing. In God, however, there is no potentiality whatsoever; He is Pure Act of Being with no imperfection or need to be perfected. He is Absolute Perfection.

3. *Potency is to Act as the Imperfect is to the Perfect*. In its strict meaning, act means perfection, a completion, something determinate. Potency, on the other hand, is an imperfection, a capacity for perfection. The fully finished marble statue of the Pietà in St. Peter's basilica is something determinate, a perfection, something in act, while the shapeless block of marble that was the initial material that Michelangelo would later use would be the determinable, the imperfect, the potency, the potentiality for perfection.

4. *In Itself Potency is not a Mere Privation of Act but a Real Capacity for Perfection*. The external sense of sight, when not in use, is not a mere privation, but is at that very moment potentially capable of being actualized by the actual operation of seeing, which is a perfection.

5.7.1. Kinds of Act and Potency

There are various kinds of act and potency and within this variety we can draw a basic division: 1. passive potency and first act, and 2. active potency and second act.

1. *Passive Potency and First Act*. There are three basic types of passive potency (or the capacity to receive) and the corresponding first act (also called the entitative act): a) prime matter and substantial form; b) substance and accidents; and c) essence and act of being.

a) *Prime Matter and Substantial Form*. For a description, please see the heading *The Essence of Material Beings* in the section on essence and act of being.

b) *Substance and Accidents*. Substances (potencies) are the subjects of accidents (acts) which are their perfections. Substances like apples have certain accidental perfections like redness, smoothness, and sweetness. In contrast to prime matter, substances are subjects already in act through their forms but in turn are in potency with respect to their accidents (acts) like qualities and relations.

c) *Essence* (*Potentia Essendi*) *and Act of Being* (*Actus Essendi or Esse*). Essences like "man," "dog," "rabbit," and "fish" (potencies) are different ways of participating in being (acts). All creatures have the act of being (act) limited by their respective essences (potencies). Separated forms, hylemorphic composites and even accidents, which all participate in the act of being (accidents through their union with the substance), are limiting receptive potencies with respect to *esse*. In corporeal beings their forms are acts with respect to their matters, but are in turn in potency with respect to their acts of being. Matter is potential with respect to form and also, through the form, potential with respect to the *actus essendi* or act of being.

2. *Active Potency and Second Act*. Active potency is the power or capacity to produce or confer a perfection. These potencies are also called powers. The

acts corresponding to these potencies are called actions or activities. Examples of active potencies include the operative powers of intellect and will which are capable of producing the actions and activities of thinking and willing (called second acts). Both the powers of intellect and will, as well as their corresponding second acts of thinking and willing, are all accidents that belong to the human person agent of his free acts.

5.7.2. The Primacy of Act

Act has primacy over potency in a number of ways: 1. act is prior to potency as regards perfection; 2. act is prior to potency as regards knowledge; 3. act has a causal primacy over potency; and 4. act has a temporal primacy over potency.

1. *Act is Prior to Potency as Regards Perfection*. Act is perfection while potency is imperfection waiting to be perfected by act. A thing is perfect insofar as it is in act while imperfect while in potency. Being in act constitutes the end or goal towards which being in potency strives for. Sight, for example, is ordered towards the goal of seeing, and without the latter activity the operative potency would be frustrated. With regard to man, his body is the potency which receives the soul as its act and becomes subordinated to this perfection. Therefore, act is prior to potency as regards perfection.

2. *Act is Prior to Potency as Regards Knowledge*. Potencies are known initially through their acts. Substances (potencies), for example, are known initially through their accidents (acts). Accidents don't hide substances; they reveal them. In a forest for example, we first smell an animal and glance at its brown hide and large shape and then, coming closer to it, recognize it as a grizzly bear. Therefore, act is prior to potency as regards knowledge.

3. *Act has a Causal Primacy over Potency*. What is in potency does not become actual without the influence of something already in act. For example, fire (something in act) causes cold wood (in potency) to become hot and then to be fire. Without that prior act cold wood would never of itself be in act. Either it burns by fire (in act) or is heated by the sun (in act) which causes the cold wood to be hot. Therefore, act has a causal primacy over potency.

4. *Act has a Temporal Primacy over Potency*. Potency does indeed have a certain temporal primacy over act; for example, the operative powers of intellect and will (active potencies) come before the production of the activities

of thinking and willing (second acts). However, the operative potencies of intellect and will point to an agent cause, the soul, which is prior in act. Another example: an acorn (in potency) came before the full grown pine tree (in act), but this acorn had to be, of necessity, the fruit of a prior tree (in act). Therefore, act has a temporal primacy over potency.

5.7.3. The Relation Between Act and Potency as Constitutive Principles of Being

Regarding the relation between act and potency as principles of being, we can state the following: 1. potency is the subject in which the act is received; 2. act is limited by the potency which receives it; 3. act is multiplied through potency; 4. act is related to potency as that which is participated to the participant; and 5. the act-potency composition does not destroy the substantial unity of being.

1. *Potency is the Subject in which the Act is Received*. We look at a man, for example, and begin to know his various perfections (acts), like the color of his hair, eyes and skin, without ever denying that these perfections reside in that person (potency), who is the subject of these perfections (acts).

2. *Act is Limited by the Potency which Receives It*. Every act received in a subject is limited by the capacity of that subject. The perfection of redness in an apple is limited by the substance apple, its recipient. An apple can only contain as much redness as the dimensions of that fruit allow. Unreceived act is in itself unlimited, and when one finds limited instances of act, it is because of a potency which receives and limits it.

3. *Act is Multiplied Through Potency*. The same act can be present in many individuals which can receive it, as for example, when the specific perfection "apple" is possessed by many individual apples because it is present in a potency, namely, prime matter. The same substantial form is multiplied in many individuals of the same species. Accidents (acts) are also multiplied by their respective potencies, namely substances. The accident "red," for example, is multiplied insofar as there are many objects having that same color.

4. *Act is Related to Potency as that Which is Participated to the Participant*. The doctrine of act and potency can be understood using the theory

of participation.[108][108] To participate means to have something in part or something in a partial manner. This presupposes that there are other subjects that possess the same perfection, none of them possessing that said perfection in full. Also, in participation, the subject cannot be identical to what it possesses; the subject merely possesses this perfection by participation only. The subject of participation has the perfection, possesses the perfection; he is not the perfection, he doesn't have the perfection by essence, that is, in a full and exclusive manner, by being identical with it. Creatures have the act of being while God is the Act of Being by Essence, that is, Essence and Act of Being are identical in the Divine Being. Now, while pure actuality is act by essence, the relationship of act and potency is one of participation. The subject (potency) capable of receiving a perfection (act) is the participant, and the act itself is that which is participated in by the subject.

[108][108] For in depth studies on Thomistic participation metaphysics see: C. A. HART, *Participation and the Thomistic Five Ways*, "The New Scholasticism", 26 (1952), pp. 267-282; W. NORRIS CLARKE, *The Meaning of Participation in St. Thomas Aquinas*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 26 (1952), pp. 147-157 ; L. B. GEIGER, *La participation dans la philosophie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris, 1953; G. LINDBECK, *Participation and Existence in the Interpretation of St. Thomas Aquinas*, "Franciscan Studies", 17 (1957), pp. 1-22, 107-125; C. FABRO, *Partecipazione e causalità*, S.E.I., Turin, 1961 ; *La nozione metafisica di partecipazione*, 3rd ed., S.E.I. Turin, 1963; *Elementi per una dottrina tomistica della partecipazione*, "Divinitas", 2 (1967), pp. 559-586 ; *The Intensive Hermeneutics of Thomistic Philosophy: The Notion of Participation*, "The Review of Metaphysics", 27 (1974), pp. 449-491; *Partecipazione agostiniana e partecipazione tomistica*, "Doctor Communis", 39 (1986), pp. 282-291 ; H. J. JOHN, *Participation Revisited*, "The Modern Schoolman", 39 (1962), pp. 154-165 ; J. ARTOLA, *Creación y participación*, Publicaciones de la Institución Aquinas, Madrid, 1963; P. C. COURTÈS, *Participation et contingence selon Saint Thomas d' Aquin*, "Revue Thomiste", 77 (1969), pp. 201-235; J. CHIU YUEN HO, *La doctrine de la participatión dans le Commentaire de Saint Thomas sur le "Liber de Causis"*, "Revue philosophique de Louvain", 27 (1972), pp. 360-383; T. FAY, *Participation: The Transformation of Platonic and Neoplatonic Thought in the Metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas*, "Divus Thomas", 76 (1973), pp. 50-64; O. N. DERISI, *Participación, acto y potencia y analogia en Santo Tomás*, "Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica", 65 (1974), pp. 415-435; *La existencia o* esse *imparticipado divino, causa de todo ser participado*, "Sapientia", 31 (1976), pp. 109-120; *El fundamento de la metafisica tomista: El* Esse *e Intelligere Divino, fundamento y causa de todo ser y entender participados*, "Sapientia" 35 (1980), pp. 9-26; *Del ente participado al Ser imparticipado*, "Doctor Communis", 35 (1982), pp. 26-38; *La participación del ser*, "Sapientia", 37 (1982), pp. 5-10, 83-86, 243-248; *La participación de la esencia*, in *Cinquant'anni di Magistero Teologico. Scritti in onore di Mons. Antonio Piolanti*, "Studi tomistici" (26), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1985, pp. 173-184; P. LAZZARO, *La dialettica della partecipazione nella* Summa contra Gentiles *di S. Tommaso d'Aquino*, Parallelo, Regio Calabria, 1976 ; K. REISENHUBER, *Participation as a Structuring Principle in Thomas Aquinas' Teaching on Divine Names*, "Studies in Medieval Thought", 20 (1978), pp. 240-242; A. BASAVE, *La doctrina metafisica de la participación en santo Tomás de Aquino*, "Giornale di Metafisica", 30 (1979), pp. 257-266; A. L. GONZÁLEZ, *Ser y participación*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 1979; P. MAZZARELLA, *Creazione, partecipazione, e tempo secondo san Tommaso d'Aquino*, "Studia Patavina", (1982), pp. 308-335; J. F. WIPPEL, Thomas Aquinas and *Participation*, in *Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, pp. 117-158 ; C. P. BIGGER, *St. Thomas on Essence and Participation*, "The New Scholasticism", 62 (1988), pp. 319-348; T. TYN, *Metafisica della sostanza. Partecipazione e analogia entis*, Edizioni Studio Domenicano, Bologna, 1991, pp. 18-20, 523-583, 813-933 ; R. A. TE VELDE, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1995.

5. *The Act-Potency Composition does not Destroy the Substantial Unity of a Being*. Act and potency are not subsistent beings (*entia*) in themselves but rather constituent principles of finite beings (*entia*). They are not things but rather the co-principles of a thing. Potency is by nature a capacity for perfection, a capacity towards an act, to which it is essentially ordered and without which it would not be able to exist at all (prime matter [potency], for example, exists for the form [act], without which it simply would not exist). Potency's union with its act cannot therefore give rise to two individual things, two separate beings.

5.8. Essence (*Essentia*) and Act of Being (*Esse*)

5.8.1. Essence (*Essentia*)

The substances we see around us are not simple but are composed of two principles: essence and act of being, the former being related to *esse* as a potency, and the latter being related to *essentia* as act. Essence (*essentia* in Latin) is the proper potency of the act of being (*esse*) and together with this act constitutes the substance (*substantia*). Essence[109][109] confers upon this substance a specific manner of being. It is defined as *that by which a thing is what it is*.

As the principle of operations, essence is called nature. Insofar as essence is signified by a definition, it is called quiddity or "whatness." Insofar as essence is known, it is possible for it to be referred to many individuals, and for this reason it is called a universal. Though capable of being utilized in these various senses, essence nevertheless stresses its relationship with *esse*, it being the principle in which the *esse* of a thing is received and by which it is restricted to a determinate form; essence is so called insofar as a thing has *esse* in it and through it.

5.8.2. The Essence of Material Beings

All corporeal substances are hylemorphic composites, that is, beings composed of matter and form. Every material or corporeal substance is an essentially single individual being compounded of two intrinsic essential principles, namely, prime matter and substantial form. In a material thing prime matter is potential, passive, and determinable, while the other co-principle,

[109][109] For in-depth studies on essence, see: J. E. HARE, *Aristotle's Theories of Essence*, Princeton, 1975 ; C. BIGGER, *St. Thomas on Essence and Participation*, "The New Scholasticism," 62 (1988), pp. 319-348.

substantial form, is actualizing, determining and active. Prime matter in a material thing is the root of receptivity and passivity. Because of it, a body can be acted upon, moved, divided, changed, or corrupted. Because of the substantial form the material substance maintains its own identity, possesses its own properties, causes changes in other bodies, and makes itself known. By reason of the substantial form the body is of a certain nature, an individual member of a particular species. We may have ten pieces of chalk yet they have the same substantial form, the form of chalk, that is, the bodies of the same species have the same substantial form in different parcels of matter. Prime matter and substantial form are the two essential co-principles of the substance. Taken by themselves, they are incomplete substances, but taken together in the hylemorphic composite being they form one complete substance. Matter and form are the intrinsic causes of the substance. Prime matter is the receptive subject of the substantial form and embodies it in concrete being. Substantial form actualizes the matter, determining it to a specific nature. Form is the principle of nature or species while matter is the principle of individuation.[110][110] Matter is the principle which multiplies the forms. Aside from multiplying the forms, matter also individuates or singularizes it. It is matter, in which the form of the species is received, that makes the existence of many individuals of the same species possible.

5.8.3. Act of Being (*Esse*)

The principal element of being (*ens*) is its act of being (*esse*). Every single being in the universe *is* in reality, but no being can claim to *be* in the pure sense as individual created things are particular modes of the act of being and cannot be the act of being itself. Created things *have* a participated act of being,

[110][110]For in-depth studies on individuation, see: G. M. MANSER, *Das thomistische Individuationsprinzip*, "Divus Thomas," 12 (1934), pp. 221-27, 279-300 ; E. HUGUENY, *Résurrection et indentité corporelle selon les philosophies de l'individuation*, "Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques," 23 (1934), pp. 94-106 ; J. B. WALL, *The Mind of St. Thomas on the Principle of Individuation*, "The Modern Schoolman," 1940-1941, pp. 41 ff. ; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *Il pensiero di San Tommaso sul principio di individuazione*, "Divus Thomas," 45 (1942), pp. 35-81 ; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *De Gaetano e il principio d'individuazione*, "Divus Thomas," 26 (1949), pp. 202-208 ; J. BOBIK, *La doctrine de Saint Thomas sur l'individuation des substances corporelles,* "Revue Philosophique de Louvain," 51 (1953), pp. 5-41 ; J. BOBIK, *Dimensions in the Individuation of Bodily Substances*, "Philosophical Studies," 4 (1954), pp. 60-79 ; J. KLINGER, *Das Prinzip der Individuation bei Thomas von Aquin*, "Münsterschwarzacher Studien (II)," Vier Turme Verlag, Münsterschwarzacher, 1964 ; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *Il principio d'individuazione dei corpi e Giovanni di S. Tommaso*, "Aquinas," 12 (1969), pp. 59-99 ; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *Il principio d'individuazione nella scuola tomistica*, Pontificia Università Lateranense, Rome, 1971 ; S. P. SFEKAS, *The Problem of Individuation in Aristotelian Metaphysics*, New York, 1979 ; J. OWENS, *Thomas Aquinas: Dimensive Quantity as Individuating Principle*, "Medieval Studies," 50 (1988), pp. 279-310.

determined and limited by each being's proper essence. Creatures *have* the act of being but cannot be said to be pure and simple *esse*.

The act of being (*esse*) is an act which is a perfection of all reality. In metaphysics, act refers not only to transient actions and immanent operations of an agent subject but designates any perfection of an individual being. *Esse* is a universal act for it is not an exclusive property of a particular type of being but is proper of all things that exist in reality. The act of being is a total act for it is a perfection that includes all that an individual being has and encompasses all that an individual being is. If essence is that which makes a thing to be this or that, the act of being is that which makes a thing to *be*. A thing *is*, not because of its essence, which is the principle of diversity, but because of its act of being which is the act common to all beings. The act of being precedes every other act as no action, property or agent subject would *be* without it. Actions and immanent operations like understanding and willing are accidents that presuppose a subsisting subject, but all presuppose *esse* for without *esse* nothing would *be*. Therefore, the act of being is the principal and innermost act of a being which gives the subject, from within the substantial being itself, each and every one of its perfections. *Esse* intrinsically actualizes every substantial being as it is their principle of reality.

The act of being is the most intensive act as it contains, in its pure state, all perfections. Creatures have varying degrees of perfections as they participate in the act of being according to their determinate essences. Individual beings possess *esse* in different degrees of intensity. Insects, for example, participate in the act of being in a much less intense way than say, a dog. A human person participates in the act of being in a much more intense way than a horse. Angels have a greater and more intense act of being than men have. God alone is Pure Act of Being, in whom Act of Being and Essence are identified. Only God is All-Perfect, possessing the act of being in all its fullness and intensity, infinitely surpassing all the perfections of the entire created universe. As the act of being possesses the characteristics of act in the fullest way, it is able to subsist independently of any potency whatsoever. Thus, God, Pure Act of Being, is devoid of any imperfection and limitation. On the other hand, all created things possess a limited and less intense participated act of being, and the more imperfect they are, the lesser act of being do they participate in. Therefore, the diverse perfections of creatures created by God, who alone is Pure Act of Being, have their foundation in the diverse ways of possessing the act of being, for the ultimate source of all an individual being's perfection is its *esse*.

5.8.4. The Real Distinction between Essence and Act of Being

Those who deny that St. Thomas ever defended the real distinction between essence and act of being in finite beings include M. Chossat,[111[111]] P. Descoqs,[112[112]] and the Jesuit Francis Cunningham,[113[113]] who work under the influence of Suarezian essentialism. However, Suarez himself admits that St. Thomas held the real distinction, which, in spite of this, he denies.

The real distinction between essence (*essentia*) and act of being (*esse*)[114[114]] is one of the central doctrines of St. Thomas, first sketched out by

[111[111]] Cf. M. CHOSSAT, *Dieu*, in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 4, pt. 1, col. 1180; *L'Averroisme de saint Thomas. Note sur la distinction d'essence et d'existence à la fin du XIII siècle*, "Archives de Philosophie", 9 (1932), pp. 129(465)-177(513).

[112[112]] Cf. P. DESCOQS, *Thomisme et Suarézisme*, "Archives de Philosophie", 4 (1926), pp. 131-161; *Thomisme et scholastique à propos de M. Rougier*, "Archives de Philosophie" 5.1 (1935), pp. 156-159.

[113[113]] Cf. F. CUNNINGHAM, *Distinction According to St. Thomas*, "The New Scholasticism", 36 (1962), pp. 279-312; *Textos de Santo Tomás sobre el* esse *y* esencia, "Pensamiento", 20 (1964), pp. 283-306; *The 'Real Distinction' in John Quidort*, "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 8 (1970), pp. 9-28; *Essence and Existence in Thomism: A Mental vs. The "Real Distinction"*, University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1988.

[114[114]] For studies on the real distinction between essence and act of being, see: H. RENARD, *Essence and Existence*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 21 (1946), pp. 53-65; H. RENARD, *Being and Essence*, "The New Scholasticism", 23 (1949), pp. 62-70; C. FABRO, *La nozione metafisica di partecipazione*, 2nd ed., S.E.I., Turin, 1950, pp. 218-219; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *La distinzione reale nel 'De ente et essentia' di S. Tommaso*, "Doctor Communis", 10 (1957), pp. 165-173; W. L. REESE, *Concerning the "Real Distinction" of Essence and Existence*, "The Modern Schoolman" 38 (1961), pp. 142-148; M. W. KEATING, *The Relation Between the Proofs for the Existence of God and the Real Distinction of Essence and Existence in St. Thomas Aquinas*, Fordham University, New York, 1962; L. SWEENEY, *Existence/Essence in Thomas Aquinas's Early Writings*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 37 (1963), pp. 105-109; J. BOBIK, *Aquinas on Being and Essence*, Notre Dame, IN, 1965, pp. 162-170; J. OWENS, *Quiddity and Real Distinction in St. Thomas Aquinas*, "Mediaeval Studies", 27 (1965), pp. 1-22; B. NEGRONI, *Essenza ed esistenza nell'omonimo opuscolo di S.Tommaso d'Aquino,* in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo VII Centenario* (6), Rome-Naples, 1974, pp. 238-289; A. MAURER, *St. Thomas Aquinas, On Being and Essence*, Toronto, 1968, pp. 21 ff; T. E. Dillon, *The Real Distinction Between Essence and Existence in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 1977; M. KOSUGI, *Esse and Essentia in St. Thomas Aquinas*, "Studies in Medieval Thought", 21 (1979), pp. 155-163; J. WIPPEL, *Aquinas's Route to the Real Distinction. A Note on the "De ente et essentia", c. 4*, "The Thomist", 43 (1979), pp. 279-295; J. OWENS, *Stages and Distinction in "De ente": A Rejoinder*, "The Thomist", 45 (1981), pp. 99-123; J. WIPPEL, *Essence and Existence in the "De ente", ch. 4*, and *Essence and Existence in Other Writings,* in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1984, pp. 107-161; S. MacDONALD, *The Esse/Essentia Argument in Aquinas's "De ente et essentia",* "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 22 (1984), p. 158 ff ; L. DEWAN, *Saint Thomas, Joseph Owens, and the Real Distinction Between Being and Essence*, "The Modern Schoolman", 61 (1984), pp. 145-156; W. PATT, *Aquinas's Real Distinction and Some Interpretations*, "The New Scholasticism", 62 (1988), pp. 1-29; M. BROWN, *Aquinas and the Real Distinction: A Re-evaluation*, "New Blackfriars", 67 (1988), pp. 170-177; F. A. CUNNINGHAM, *Essence and Existence in Thomism: A Mental vs. the "Real Distinction?"*, University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1988; M. BEUCHOT, *La esencia y la existencia en Tomás de Aquino*, "Revista de Filosofia" (Mexico), 22 (1989), pp. 149-165; L. DEWAN, *St. Thomas and the Distinction between Form and* Esse *in Caused Things*, "Gregorianum", 80 (1999), pp. 353-369.

the Stagirite[115[115]] and later developed and perfected by the Angelic Doctor. The act of being is necessarily really distinct from essence since act is really distinct from its potency which receives and limits it.

5.8.5. Three Arguments Supporting the Real Distinction Between Essence and Act of Being in Finite Beings

1. *The Argument Based on the Limitation Found in Creatures*. Every created being possesses the act of being in a partial manner both in extension, as it is not the only one, and in intensity of being, as its actuality is possessed in a limited manner. No creature possesses the perfections to the greatest possible degree. Therefore, no created being is identical with its *esse* but rather participates in the act of being in a limited way, its essence being the receptive potency that limits the act of being.

2. *The Argument Based on the Multiplicity of Creatures*. The obvious fact that there are a multitude of beings around necessarily reveals that created beings are composed of act of being and essence. Why? Because if something's essence were its own act of being it would necessarily be one and simple. *Esse* is really multiplied in many individuals, but this would be impossible unless the act of being be united to a potency – the essence – really distinct from it.

3. *The Argument Based on the Similarity Found Among Beings*. If two or more creatures are similar there must be something in them that accounts for their conformity and something that accounts for their difference. The source of their similarity must naturally be distinct from the source of diversity. Now, all creatures are similar because they possess the act of being, and because of this they all exist. But they differ from one another on account of their essences (essence is the principle of specification) which limit *esse* in diverse manners. Therefore, act of being and essence are really distinct from one another.

115[115] Alvira, Clavell and Melendo note that, "according to some authors, the real distinction between the act of being and essence was made even before St. Thomas Aquinas. Its origin could be traced back to Aristotle who said in that famous passage of the *Posterior Analytics* (II, 7, 92b ff.) with regard to man, that the τὸ δὲ τί (essence) is not the εἶναι (act of being). Some authors have considered this distinction to be merely a distinction of reason, not a real one. But Aristotle further explained that 'the act of being of a thing is not its own essence, for the act of being does not belong to any genus.' Despite this contribution, however, one does not find in his works a complete development of this doctrine"(T. ALVIRA, L. CLAVELL, T. MELENDO, *op. cit*., pp. 109-110).

5.8.6. A Short History of the Real Distinction between Essence and Act of Being

Aristotle first laid the groundwork for the real distinction in the *Posterior Analytics*, though a developed doctrine is nowhere to be found in his writings. The Stagirite's doctrine of act and potency offered a basis for the real distinction, but it is clear that his doctrine did not teach that all the perfections of the subject, including the subject, were in potency to the act of being, the act of acts and the perfection of perfections. Plato suggests the real distinction in his doctrine of participation, but it remains just that, a suggestion which was to be developed later on by the Neoplatonists, the head of whom being Plotinus who taught that all beings, with the exception of God, had composition. Augustine teaches that God is Being by Essence, whereas creatures are beings by participation and can therefore be included among the list of those affirming the real distinction. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, with his participation theory, should also be included in the list of the defenders of the real distinction. Boethius holds a real distinction between *esse* and *id quod est*, but his *esse* is clearly not the act of being but rather second substance, the *id quod est*, in contrast, being the first substance of Aristotle. Therefore he does not give any existential meaning to *esse* and thus does not, in the final analysis, teach the real distinction between *esse* and essence. Al-Farabi and Avicenna both taught the real distinction, but for Avicenna, *esse* is understood to be a kind of accident to the essence. Averroes, and later St. Thomas, criticized this interpretation. William of Auvergne, St. Albert the Great, and St. Bonaventure, all taught the real distinction, but it was Aquinas who perfected the doctrine. There is no doubt that St. Thomas held the real distinction of essence and act of being in finite creatures, as well as the identity of essence and act of being in God. To deny the real distinction would make Aquinas' doctrine of essence and act of being simply unintelligible. Aegidius Romanus, or Giles of Rome, defended the real distinction, but in such a weak way, erroneously teaching that essence and act of being were really distinct like two things (*distinguuntur ut res et res*), that his views were rejected and attacked by Henry of Ghent who denied the real distinction. Others denying the real distinction include Averroes, Siger of Brabant, and the Latin Averroists. Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, and the famous Jesuit metaphysician Francisco Suarez also denied the real distinction, all being influenced by Henry of Ghent. Suarez denied the real distinction in favour of a virtual distinction. Also rejecting the views of the Dominican Aquinas on the real distinction were fellow Dominicans Durand de Saint Pourçain and James of Metz. Certain Jesuits, who do not follow the lead of Suarez and defend the real distinction include Schiffini, Billot, Mattiussi,

Remer, Maurice de la Taille, Boyer, and Henri Renard. Most of the early Thomists defended the real distinction including Capreolus and Francis de Sylvestris.

5.9. The Subsisting Subject

A consideration of the various constitutive principles of being should naturally have as its goal being in the fullest sense, which is the *suppositum*, the subsisting subject. The term subsisting subject designates the particular being with all of its perfections. The *suppositum* is being in the full sense. It is being in the most proper sense of the term, subsisting, existing in itself as something complete and finished, distinct from all other things. It is an individual whole, subsisting by virtue of a single act of being, and cannot be shared with another. Its characteristic marks are its individuality, subsistence, and incommunicability or unsharedness. The subsisting subject (*suppositum*) is composed of act of being, essence, and accidents. The names that designate it include the *whole*, the *concrete*, the *singular*, the *individual*, the *suppositum* or *hypostasis*, and the *first substance* (primary substance), which is the individual something that exists in reality. Man is a particular type of *suppositum*, namely, a *rational suppositum*. Boethius was the first philosopher to formulate an adequate definition of the person as an individual substance of a rational nature (*individua substantia rationalis naturae)*. The most perfect beings that exist are persons, namely, God, angels, and men.

Psychological definitions of the human person which reduce him to self-consciousness (Descartes[116][116]) or will to power (Nietzsche) or to making-freedom (Sartre), for example, are totally inadequate since self-consciousness and free-will are merely accidents that belong to the human *suppositum*, both accidents and subject being actualized by the act of being, the act of acts and perfection of perfections. The ultimate metaphysical foundation of understanding, willing, and personhood itself is the participated act of being given him by the Divine Act of Being.

The Cartesian immanentist path could only lead logically to atheism. Once we are unable to recuperate reality itself, then we are not able to demonstrate the existence of God commencing with real beings in the extra-mental world and going up, through the principle of causality, to God. One becomes either an agnostic or, one step further, an atheist. If we are unable to know reality then

[116][116] Cf. DESCARTES, *Les Principes de la philosophie*, I, 8.

there is no objective truth, for truth follows being, logical truth being defined as the conformity or adequation of our judgments with reality. And if we are unable to know reality, as Hume and Kant maintain, then we are unable to know stable human nature as it is in reality, leading to the denial of objective morality. So, no God, no objective truth, no objective morality, as preached by the likes of Marx, Nietzsche, Feuerbach, and Comte, and what do we have? The mass murders of the twentieth century with the likes of such "supermen" as Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot. Is there a direct link between immanentism, the dissolution of the ontological concept of the human person for a merely psychological one (a consequence of immanentist gnoseology), and the horrors against the human person during the last century, undeniably the bloodiest of centuries? Yes, a direct link, leading all the way up to the Cartesian *Cogito*.

All the horrors of the last century on such a vast scale led a number of thinkers to exchange the corrupt psychological definition of the person for a personalistic, dialogical (intersubjective), one. The founder of the personalist school was a Frenchman by the name of Charles Renouvier (1815-1903), who came out with his most famous work entitled *Personalism*, at the end of his life (1903). Personalism had as its epicenter the France of the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. Another famous French personalist is Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950), whose most famous work goes by the same name as Renouvier's – *Personalisme* – which was first published in 1949. Others who have used the dialogical (intersubjective) perspective include the Frenchmen Maurice Nedoncelle and Paul Ricoeur (born in 1913), the Germans Max Scheler (1874-1928) and Romano Guardini (1885-1968, a German of Italian origins), the Jewish philosophers Martin Buber (1878-1965) and Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), the Russian Nikolai Berdjaiev (1874-1948), the Italian Luigi Stefanini (1891-1956), and the Spaniard José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955).

Against all forms of totalitarianism and other systems that degrade man (such as absolute idealism, nazism, marxism and other forms of materialism), personalism has, as the center of its philosophy, the human person, unrepeatable, of absolute value, worthy of the highest esteem and respect, and in continual dialogue with others. For Renouvier, the foundation of all philosophical inquiry must be man in his concreteness and individuality. Personalism highlights that which is unique in the human person, such as his freedom, his individuality, his unrepeatableness, his capacity for culture, language and communication, his human rights, his responsibilities, his capacity for vocation and love. Personalists stress being instead of having; man

should be respected for what he is, rather than for what he has. They also stress human freedom instead of determination, openness to dialogue instead of egoism, and altruism instead of greed. Man is not a closed being, but open to others, a communicator who lives with and encounters others. He is an interpersonal reality, a being in dialogue. For the most part, personalists have been theists, either Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, open to transcendence and to the transcendent One (who is the Supreme Thou).

For Mounier, the psychological definition of the person (which reduces man to thought, will etc.) is inadmissible, for "I cannot think without my being and be without my body: by means of my body I am exposed to myself, the world, and others; by means of my body I escape from the solitude of a thought which would only be the thought of my thought. Refusing to concede a complete transcendence to myself, the body continually projects me outside of myself, into the problematics of the world and the struggle of man."[117][117] Instead of thought or self-consciousness, man is rather an "incarnate existence," an "incorporated existence." The primary properties of the human person brought out by Mounier and many of the personalists, who consider man from the dialogical perspective, are vocation ("every person has such a meaning that he cannot be substituted for in the place he occupies in the universe of persons"[118][118]), action ("the incessant activity of the person is a search until death for an anticipated, longed-for unity that is never realized"[119][119]), and communication or encounter with others: "the first movement revealing a human being in the prime of infancy is a movement towards others: the baby of six to twelve months of age, leaving vegetative life, discovers himself in others, recognizes himself in some attitudes regulated by his gaze at others. It is only later, at about three years of age, that he will have his first wave of conscious egocentrism…The first experience of the person is the experience of the second person: the *you*, and therefore the *we*, comes before the *I*, or at least accompanies it. It is in material nature (which we are partially subjected to) that exclusion reigns, in that one space cannot be occupied twice; the person, instead, through the movement that makes him exist, expresses himself, he is by nature communicable, and is even the only one who can be himself."[120][120]

In *Personalism*, Mounier develops his following theses: 1. The human person is psycho-physical. He is, as was mentioned, an "incarnate existence,"

[117][117] E. MOUNIER, *Personalismo*, AVE, Rome, 1964, p. 39.
[118][118] E. MOUNIER, *op. cit*., p. 73.
[119][119] E. MOUNIER, *op. cit*., p. 72.
[120][120] E. MOUNIER, *op. cit*., pp. 48-49.

an "incorporated existence," not just thought, will, etc.; 2. The human person is transcendent with respect to things in the world. He is able to free himself from the rest of nature; only man knows the profundities of the universe, only he can transform it, shape it in conformity to his designs; 3. The human person is open towards others through communication; 4. The human person is active or dynamic; he is in an incessant quest or search for a never to be realized unity; 5. Man has a vocation, someone in the universe that can never be substituted for someone or anything else; and 6. Man has freedom, not as a condemnation in the Sartrean sense ("man is condemned to be free"), but rather as a gift that he can accept or refuse.

For Gabriel Marcel the human person cannot be studied by means of the instruments of the empirical sciences, in a totally objective air, for the person is not a problem but a mystery who is revealed by means of a metaphysical inquiry. Like Mounier, he defines man as an incarnate being. But he intends this to mean something dynamic; he does not mean incarnate being in the Platonic sense of soul, of spirit being incarnated in a body but rather, the human person is incarnated in action. For him, the I becomes a person only in the measure that he commits himself to action and assumes responsibility for his own acts. I find that this position falls into the very doctrine that the personalists which to avoid, the reduction of the human person to consciousness, thought, will, and this particular case, to *making*. I retain that Marcel and the other personalists are woefully lacking in an adequate metaphysical grounding of the person, which can only be provided by a realist ontology which centers on being (*ens*) and on *esse* as act of acts and perfection of perfections. Only the ontological or metaphysical definition of man is truly adequate. Man is the rational *suppositum*, the rational subsistent, his very dignity derived from the particularly intense possession of the act of being that he participates in. For Battista Mondin, "the one (definition of the person) that best expresses what is indispensable to the concept of person is the ontological definition of Boethius and Thomas. In fact, without the autonomy of being, without subsistence, all the rest (self-consciousness, freedom, communication) can be shipwrecked in the ocean of the impersonal. For an essential definition, what is expressed in the ontological concept is sufficient, because it includes both the generic element (subsistence) and the specific element (rationality)."[121][121] Instead of the definition of the person as a rational subsistent, Mondin substitutes the term rationality for the following three qualities: self-consciousness, communication, and self-transcendence. "The person can be defined as a subsistent gifted with

[121][121] B. MONDIN, *op. cit*., p. 256.

self-consciousness, communication, and self-transcendence…by virtue of subsistence he is distinct from all others; through self-coonsciousness he recognizes himself as unique and unrepeatable but at the same time free, social, and perfectible; through communication he enters into rapport with others – in a rapport of love, friendship, and sympathy, but also in a rapport of aversion, hate and hostility; through self-transcendence he is called to surpass all the confines with which space and time seek to block his ascension, as he attempts to penetrate the realm of the absolute and eternal."[122][122] With this definition of the person (which he calls "global"), he incorporates and roots the properties described in the psychological and dialogical concepts of the person in the metaphysics of being.

B: THE TRANSCENDENTALS OF BEING

5.10. The Nature of the Transcendentals

What are the transcendentals? Transcendental modes of being, convertible and coextensive with being.[123][123] They are certain supreme modes or attributes necessarily connected with every being, which are different aspects of the same fundamental being, but are not explicitly contained in its concept as such. These transcendental modes are called 'transcendental' inasmuch as they are not confined to the categories or classification of being, but are rather found in all, affecting each and every conceivable being; they 'transcend,' or 'go beyond' all the categories. When we use 'transcendental'[124][124] here when we talk about the transcendental modes of being we refer to that which can be predicated of being as such and therefore of every being. The transcendental properties of being are modes which pertain to being universally and necessarily, to every being without exception. When we say "properties" here we do not refer to properties in the strict sense, for then they would express something that is extrinsic to the nature of being, which is impossible. Rather, we mean "properties" in the wide sense, as inseparable from being and designating it under another aspect.[125][125]

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[122][122] B. MONDIN, *op. cit*., pp. 256-257.

[123][123] H. D. Gardeil explains that "because they are as universal as being itself, the transcendental modes are spoken of as *convertible with being*, so that in a proposition where being is the subject and one of the common modes the predicate (or vice versa), we may interchange them. If, for example, 'being is one,' then 'the one is being,' with no shift of meaning" (H. D. GARDEIL, *op. cit.*, p. 121).

[124][124] For short histories of the term "transcendental" see: H. KNITTERMEYER, *Der Terminus Transzendental in seiner historischen Entwicklung bis su Kant*, Marburg 1920; C. FABRO, *Il trascendentale tomistico*, "Angelicum", 60 (1983), pp. 534-558; L. ELDERS, *op .cit*., pp. 62-64.

[125][125] Robert Kreyche notes that when we speak of the "transcendental properties" or "transcendental attributes" of being, "properties" or "attributes" are taken in the "broad sense, as referring not to certain genera of being, but to *being as such*" (R. KREYCHE, *op. cit*., p. 169). Henry Koren explains that "strictly speaking, the term 'property' applies only to predicates which are consequent on a genus or a species. Since being is

Transcendentals are not just notions but also realities identical with being, and flow from the act of being (*esse*) and therefore can be attributed to all things that *are*. They are not realities distinct from being but are aspects or properties of being.

In reality, the transcendentals are identical with being, but as regards human knowing, they are conceptually distinct, and cannot be synonymous with the notion of being, as they express aspects which are not expressly signified by the notion of being.[126][126] The transcendentals are convertible and interchangeable with being in reality, but gnoseologically speaking, though they are interchangeable as predicates of the same subject, they are nevertheless distinct notions. The notions of "one" and "something" add a negation to the notion of being. "One" negates a being's internal division and "something" negates the identity of one thing with another. The transcendentals truth (*verum*), goodness (*bonum*), and beauty (*pulchrum*) add a relation of reason to our notion of being.

The distinction between the transcendental modes of being and being itself is formally considered a logical distinction. However, we cannot say that it is purely logical since being presents various aspects to the mind of the person who examines it. We can say that it is a "virtual" distinction, that is, it is a distinction that has a basis in reality, even though the terms of the distinction are not really distinct. Also, if one of the terms (e.g. being) implicitly contains the knowledge of the others (e.g. one, true, good, and beauty), the distinction before us is a minor virtual or a minor logical distinction. Let us explain virtual distinction again. A real distinction is a distinction that exists independently of one's mind, pertaining to elements of reality of which one is not actually the other or others. A logical distinction or a distinction of reason exists only in the mind. It is but a product of mental activity, occuring when the mind forms different concepts of what in itself is simply one. On the other hand, we have what is called the virtual distinction which is a distinction of reason which has a foundation in reality. If there be not a foundation in reality, the distinction of reason is a product of the mind pure and simple; it is a purely logical or verbal distinction. This is not the case with the distinction of the transcendentals from being, for while not real, it nevertheless has a foundation in reality. It is a virtual distinction. But let us be even more precise as regards the virtual

neither a genus nor a species, it should be clear that the term is used here in a wider sense to indicate a predicate which is not identical in concept with being but flows from it of necessity" (H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., p. 49).

[126][126] Cf. R. TE VELDE, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden 1995, p. 55.

distinction. There are two types of virtual distinctions: major virtual distinction and minor virtual distinction. In a major virtual distinction the concepts distinguished may be such that one contains the other or others only potentially (as genus the species). In a minor virtual distinction one concept contains the other or others actually but not explicitly (as analogue does the analogated perfections, and being the transcendental properties or attributes). This latter, the minor virtual distinction, regards the type of distinction of the transcendentals from being.

Every being can be considered in itself absolutely or in relation to others. As regards being in itself, one could consider it affirmatively (as such, it signifies an essence or thing [*res*]) or negatively (as undivided being, that is, as "one" [*unum*]). As regards being in relation to others, being has two opposite attributes: 1. Its distinction from all other beings, and 2. Its conformity with certain other things.

1. Being in its distinction from all other beings can be said to be "something" (*aliquid*) ; 2. As regards being in its conformity with certain other things considered in relation to the intellectual soul (as it encompasses being as such) we can say that (a) Being, in its conformity with the intellect, is true (*verum*) ; (b) Being, in its relation to the will, is good (*bonum*) ; and (c) Being, in its conformity with the soul through a certain interaction between knowledge and rational appetition, is beautiful (*pulchrum*). Of the six transcendental notions of being, "four of them are more basic and apply to God as well as to creatures; they are unity, truth, goodness, and beauty."[127][127]

C: CAUSALITY

5.11. The Principle of Causality

A cause is defined as that which really and positively influences a particular being (*ens*) or thing, making this particular being (*ens*) or thing be dependent upon it in a certain way. Causality[128][128] is the aspect of a thing

[127][127] T. ALVIRA, L. CLAVELL, T. MELENDO, *op. cit*., p. 134.

[128][128] For in-depth studies on causality see: G. BALLERINI, *Il principio di causalità e l'esistenza di Dio*, Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, Florence, 1904 ; A. BERSANI, *Principium causalitatis et existentia Dei*, "Divus Thomas", 2 (1925), pp. 14-35; P. E. NOLAN, *Causality and the Existence of God*, "The Modern Schoolman", 14 (1936), pp. 16-18 ; C. FABRO, *La difesa critica del principio di causa*, "Rivista di Filosofia Neoscolastica", 27 (1936), pp. 102-141; D. HAWKINGS, *Causality and Implication*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1937 ; F. X. MEEHAN, *Efficient Causality in Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1940 ; E. R. KILZER, *Efficient Causality in the Philosophy of Nature*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 17 (1941), pp. 142-150 ; G. KLUBERTANZ, *Causality in the*

insofar as it influences the *being* of something else. It is that which exercises a positive influence upon the "to be" of something else.[129][129] It is truly the dynamic aspect of *being* which, through the act of being (*esse*), is capable of communicating its various perfections as well as to produce new things. We experience causality in our everyday lives. For example, we know that the cause of Andy's black eye was Joe who gave him a punch in the schoolyard after class the other day. Or the fact that the cause of *The Messiah* was George Frideric Handel who composed it. Or, going to St. Peter's basilica in Rome, we know that the cause of the *Pietà* was Michelangelo who sculpted it. We also have the internal experience that we are the cause of our own actions, such as the moving of our legs, of our walking to the supermarket, of the fact that we had completed a letter or finished an examination, etc.. We also have a concurrent internal and external experience of causality like the fact that we are able to impart knowledge to other persons and the fact that the heat of the sun burns our skin when we are working outdoors in the sunshine for a long period of time. Though there are other types of causality, such as material causality, formal causality, and final causality, the above examples of causality refer especially to efficient causality which is what is generally meant by a cause in everyday use. The existence of causality in our world is an evident truth which requires no demonstration. What is necessary, though, is a study and examination of its basis. Such a basis is provided by being (*ens*), which is able to cause because of its act of being (*esse*).

The most characteristic observations that are affirmable after a basic consideration of the notions of cause and effect are: 1.That the effect's very dependence on its cause with regard to the act of being is the counterpart of the real influence of the said cause on the effect. A cause is said to be a cause

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Philosophy of Nature, "The Modern Schoolman", 19 (1942), pp. 29-31 ; J. S. ALBERTSON, *Instrumental Causality in St. Thomas*, "The New Scholasticism", 28 (1954), pp. 409-435 ; F. GIARDINI, *Gradi di causalità e di similitudine*, "Angelicum", 36 (1959), pp. 26-50 ; C. FABRO, *Partecipazione e causalità*, S.E.I., Turin, 1961 ; W. H. KANE, *Existence and Causality*, "The Thomist", 28 (1964), pp. 76-92 ; C. GIACON, *La causalità del Motore Immobile*, Editrice Antenore, Padua, 1969 ; G. BLANDINO, *Discussione sulla causalità I*, "Aquinas", 23 (1980), pp. 93-113; T. M. OLSHEWSKY, *Thomas' Conception of Causation*, "Nature and System", 2 (1980), pp. 101-122 ; G. BLANDINO, *Discussione sulla causalità II*, "Aquinas", 25 (1982), pp. 515-552 ; M. PANGALLO, *Il principio di causalità nella metafisica di san Tommaso*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1991.

[129][129] Cf. H. J. KOREN, *Introduction to the Science of Metaphysics*, B. Herder Book Company, St. Louis, 1965, pp. 228-232. After having distinguished cause from principle, condition, occasion, and sufficient reason of being, Koren defines cause as "an ontological principle which exercises a positive influence upon the 'to be' of something else" (H. J. KOREN, *op. cit*., p. 232). According to Phillips, a cause is "a principle on which something else depends for *existence*" (R. P. PHILLIPS, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy*, vol. 2, Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, London, 1934, p. 236). Celestine Bittle defines cause as "that which in any way whatever exerts a positive influence in the production of a thing" (C. BITTLE, *The Domain of Being*, The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1938, p. 321).

precisely to the extent that the effect cannot come to be or exist without it. For example, Michelangelo's *Mausoleum of Julius II* in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome, which contains the famous sculpture of *Moses*, would not exist without the materials of which it is made and without the proper arrangement of these elements. Neither would this sculpture work exist without the genius of Michelangelo, even though his master hand more directly influenced the coming into being of the sculpture series than its actual being. This two-fold way of influencing the effect enables us to define a cause as anything by which something depends with regard to its being or to its coming into being ; 2. That there is a real distinction between the cause and the effect since the dependence of one thing upon another in reality would necessarily imply that there be a real distinction from one another ; 3. Lastly, the cause is prior to the effect. The cause comes before the effect as the perfection which the cause confers upon or produces in the effect must first exist in the cause in some manner. The fact that the cause is prior to the effect entails, in many instances, a precedence in time. For example, Leonardo preceded the *Mona Lisa*, Michelangelo preceded the *Last Judgment*, and Beethoven preceded the *Ninth Symphony*. But as far as the causal action is concerned, effect and its cause are simultaneous and correlative as the cause is a cause when it causes and an effect is an effect at the very moment it is being caused. If Michelangelo stopped painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel the coming into being of that particular work of art would immediately cease. If Leo Tolstoy stopped thinking during the writing of *War and Peace*, the coming into being of *War and Peace* would immediately stop.

A proper efficient cause is an agent that exercises its influence over the being of some other being, which is here called the effect, by means of an activity that is properly its own, that is, by means of an activity that flows from its own nature, its own form, an activity which is proportioned to the very nature of the agent cause. For example, in the painting of *The Transfiguration*, many causes have exercised their activity, but working together as a causal unit. We have the intelligence of Raphael, his various motor faculties or nerves, his fingers, the moved movement of his various paintbrushes, and so forth. And the complexity of this causal activity is beautifully mirrored in the complexity of the effect produced: *The Transfiguration* that carries profound meaning. The various elements that constitute the unity of the effect, a profound painted masterpiece, are proportioned to what in the agent has properly produced them. For example, the shapes, colors, shades, and textures of the painting are properly proportioned to the oilpaints and brushes utilized, whereas the meaning or intelligibility that these shapes, forms, and colors carry is properly

proportioned to the intelligence of the artist. Hence, the proper cause of the meaning of the painting has not been the oilpaints, paintbrushes, and canvas, which have no intelligence, but rather the artist who has utilized these artistic tools. Therefore, this is the first characteristic of a proper cause, that is, it produces the effect by an activity that is proportioned to its own nature or being. Now regarding the argument from the existence of an effect to the existence of God, it will be proper to argue for the existence of God as the proper cause of the very being of the effect.

One can also observe how one particular set of causes may have been needed to bring about a certain effect into being, and another set needed to sustain the effect in being. Let us take as an example the painting of Leonardo, the famous *Mona Lisa*. Once the work of art had been painted it *is* no longer the effect of the painter, the paint brushes and the oil paints. Rather, it *was* their effect. It was painted. But it is to be observed that the painting, the *Mona Lisa*, is not here and now being caused by Leonardo and his painting instruments. And yet, the *Mona Lisa* remains in existence. It exists to be enjoyed by art lovers all over the world. It keeps on keeping the being it has received, and thus, it keeps on depending on a series of causes that preserves it in being. The existence of the canvas conserves the existence of the oil paint and the oil paint conserves the existence of the meaning intended by Leonardo. And all these must exist simultaneously. This aspect of the simultaneous existence of cause and effect, as far as causal action is concerned, is of crucial interest in the demonstration of the existence of God, for once it is seen that God is needed as the sole possible proper cause of the act of being of any being, it will also be seen that God must simultaneously *be* if any thing is to *be* at all.

5.12. Material Cause, Formal Cause, Efficient Cause, and Final Cause

Causes are classified according to the various ways of real subordination which takes place, that is, the various ways of dependence of being which happen. There are four main kinds of causes: *material cause*, *formal cause*, *efficient cause*, and *final cause*.

A *material cause*[130[130]] is anything out of which and of which something is made. It is characterized as an indeterminate potential principle which remains

[130[130]] For in-depth studies regarding matter and form and material and formal causality, see: I. HUSIK, *Matter and Form in Aristotle*, Berlin, 1912 ; J. A. McWILLIAMS, *Peripatetic Matter and Form*, "Thought," 1 (1926), pp. 237-246 ; B. GERRITY, *The Relations Between Matter and Form and the Theory of Knowledge*, Catholic University Press, Washington, D. C., 1936 ; J. GOHEEN, *The Problem of Matter and Form in 'De Ente et Essentia,' of Thomas Aquinas*, Cambridge, Mass., 1940 ; W. A. VAN ROO, *Matter as a Principle of Being*,

within the effect (matter playing the role of the receptive subject of the form). In the case of Michelangelo who scultpted the *Pieta*, for example, the material cause here would be the marble. There are two types of material cause: *prime matter*, having the features of a material cause in the fullest sense, and *secondary matter*, which is the substance itself, exercising a material causality over the accidental forms which it is able to receive. The substance is called secondary matter since it already presupposes prime matter.

A *formal cause* can be defined as an intrinsic act of perfection by which a thing is whatever it is, either in the realm of substance or of accidents. In the case of our example, the formal cause would be the form of the *Pietà* statue, which corresponds to the idea that Michelangelo had of it in his mind. These two causes, material cause and formal cause, are called intrinsic causes as there is a dependence of the effect on its intrinsic constituent principles. Material and formal causality are present in all corporeal beings. By losing both or either of two in a thing makes the thing cease to be what it is. Matter is in potency which respect to form and form is the act of matter. Matter and form are causes of the entire substance of a corporeal being. As regards prime matter and substantial form, the form is the cause of matter insofar as it gives it a specific organization and confers being on it (form gives the composite *esse* by which both prime matter and substantial form subsist), whereas matter does not give being to the form but only supports it. Prime matter exists for the sake of the substantial form (but not the other way around), while, on the contrary, accidental forms exist for the sake of the perfection of the substance, which is secondary matter.

The next two causes to be defined are efficient cause and final cause. An *efficient cause* (also called the agent cause) is that primary principle or origin of any act which makes a thing to be, or to be in a certain way. The agent or efficient cause in our example would be Michelangelo himself. Unlike both the material and formal causes, the efficient cause is a principle extrinsic to the effect.

Lastly, we have the *final cause* which is defined as that for the sake of which something is done, that is, that which determines the agent to act or the goal towards which it tends through its operations. I would like to think that the final cause in our example would be to give glory to God rather than merely to be famous. Our two last causes are termed extrinsic causes where the being of

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"The Modern Schoolman," 19 (1942), pp. 47-50 ; J. PETERS, *Matter and Form in Metaphysics*, "The New Scholasticism", 31 (1957), pp. 447-483 ; L. CENCILLO, *Hylé. La materia en el corpus aristotelicum*, CSIC, Madrid, 1958 ; J. E. BOLZÁN, *Hilemorfismo y corporalidad*, "Sapientia", 40 (1985), pp. 25-32.

an effect is dependent on two extrinsic principles, the efficient and final causes. To conclude our treatment of the four causes, we can say that the matter from which something is made is a cause (the material cause), the intrinsic form of the thing actualizing the matter is a cause (the formal cause), the principle which draws out the form from matter is a cause (the efficient cause), and, finally, the goal towards which the agent tends is also a cause (the final cause).

CHAPTER 6

PHILOSOPHY OF GOD

6.1. The Nature of Philosophy of God

Also called natural theology,[131[131]] theodicy,[132[132]] philosophical theology,[133[133]] and rational theology,[134[134]] philosophy of God[135[135]] is defined as *the science of God as knowable by unaided human reason*.[136[136]] It is the philosophical science which sets forth all that unaided human reason can discover about God, His existence, nature, attributes, and operations. It is to be distinguished from sacred or supernatural theology which is based upon God's revelation. The *material object* of philosophy of God is *God*. The *formal object* of philosophy of God is *God as knowable by unaided human reason*.

Philosophy of God is an essential part of metaphysics. The former is a branch, and the highest branch at that, of the latter. Metaphysics is the science of being as being, and philosophy of God is the science of the Supreme Being, the First Cause of all things. Metaphysics' goal is to demonstrate whatever it can concerning being as being, especially the first and highest causes of being, whether those causes be intrinsic and constitutive of being, like act of being (*esse*) and essence (*essentia*), or extrinsic and productive of being, like its efficient and final causes. Now, God is the first and only proper cause of being as being, and hence to conclude to the knowledge of the existence of God is the proper goal of metaphysics. In fact, it is the principal and most important task of metaphysics (remember, metaphysics is divided into three principal parts: general metaphysics, gnoseology, and philosophy of God). God in His existence and nature is the principal object or term toward which the whole science of

[131[131]] For a brief history of this expression to designate our subject matter, see: J. OWENS, *Theodicy, Natural Theology, and Metaphysics*, "The Modern Schoolman," 28 (1951), pp. 131-134.
[132[132]] This term was coined by Leibniz in his work *Essays on Theodicy*, published in 1710 as a defense of the justice of God against difficulties arising from contingence and fate, liberty and predestination. It was published as a reply to the skeptical attacks of the Enlightenment philosopher Bayle. Theodicy literally means "God's justice" and the justice of God is the principal theme of Leibniz' work.
[133[133]] A term used for example by Leo Elders to designate our subject matter.
[134[134]] This term is used, for example, by the Italian philosopher Luigi Bogliolo.
[135[135]] This expression is used as the title of the Italian translation of Angel Luis Gonzalez' work on our subject matter. It is also used by the Jesuits Henri Renard and Thomas Gornall.
[136[136]] Aristotle called the philosophical study of God "theology" which, in the Greek, simply means the study of God. We today distinguish between natural theology (which is the philosophical study of God) and theology (which refers to sacred theology based on God's revelation).

metaphysics tends. Just as metaphysical knowledge is the crown of all natural knowledge, so philosophy of God is the crown of all metaphysical knowledge.

What is the difference between philosophy of God and sacred theology? Though both sciences have God as their material object, their formal objects are different. While the formal object of philosophy of God is, as was mentioned, God as knowable by unaided human reason, the formal object of sacred theology is God as revealed by God Himself in Revelation. This latter is the science of God as manifested by Divine Revelation. Both philosophy of God and sacred theology are wisdoms, though the former wisdom is ultimate only in the natural order while the latter wisdom is simply ultimate for who orders all things here is God as known through Himself and revealed to man. Sacred theology is wisdom in the strict sense and, for the Christian, all knowledge from philosophy of God is ultimately ordered to the knowledge of sacred theology. The existence of God is what is called a preamble of faith. *Praeambula fidei* are those truths knowable by the unaided light of human reason that are the necessary conditions for comprehending and accepting supernatural Divine Revelation.

Philosophy of God is the most perfect and sublime of all the human sciences, of all merely natural human knowledge, for in this science the highest of man's faculties, the intellect, is functioning in reference to the most perfect and highest of all intelligible objects, God. It is the most satisfying and enjoyable of all human sciences, for though what this science can tell us about the existence and nature of God may be small in quantity, the little knowledge that it does tell us affords the intellect greater joy and satisfaction and contributes more to its perfection than all the knowledge we can discover about creatures and the created universe through the other human sciences. Nevertheless, it is the hardest to learn of all the human sciences. Though this science begins with sensible intelligible experience, it goes on to penetrate into the ultimate causes of things, which cannot be sensed or even imagined, being transphysical and transimaginable. And since God is absolutely immaterial any knowledge concerning Him will be but indirect and analogical.

Philosophy of God is divided into two parts: 1. the existence of God ; and 2. the nature of God. The first part begins by examining the various errors concerning the existence of God as expressed, for example, in agnosticism and atheism. Then, the erroneous ontological argument is considered. After that, the valid demonstration of the existence of God is examined which is the *a posteriori quia* (effect to cause) demonstration. In the second part, God's

essence and attributes, as well as His immanent and transient operations, are all examined.

6.2. The Five Ways

That God exists is self-evident in itself, but is not self-evident to the human mind. Therefore, a demonstration[137][137] of His existence is needed departing from that which is more known to us, namely, His effects (real phenomena in the world around us). The four stage structure of the *a posteriori* (effect to cause) demonstration of the existence of God that St. Thomas perfected is summarized by Mondin for us: "1. The attention is drawn to a certain phenomenon (change, secondary causality, possibility, the grades of perfection, finality); 2. The relative, dependent and caused character (that is, the contingency) of the phenomenon is evidenced. Whatever changes is moved by another; second causes are in turn, caused; the possible receives its being from others; the grades of perfection receive perfection from the highest perfection; finality always requires intelligence, while natural things in themselves do not have intelligence; 3. It is demonstrated that the effective and actual reality of a contingent phenomenon cannot be explained by postulating the intervention of an infinite series of contingent causes; and 4. It is concluded that the only valid explanation of the contingent is God. He is the unmoved mover, the uncaused cause, necessary being, the most perfect being, and the supreme ordering intelligence."[138][138]

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[137][137] For studies on demonstration in Aristotle, see: O. BENNETT, *The Nature of Demonstrative Proof According to the Principles of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas*, Catholic University Press, Washington, D.C., 1943 ; Y. R. SIMON and K. MENGER, *Aristotelian Demonstration and Postulational Method*, "The Modern Schoolman", 25 (1947-48), pp. 183-192 ; E. SIMMONS, *Demonstration and Self-Evidence*, "The Thomist", 24 (1961), pp. 139-162; J. BARNES, *Aristotle's Theory of Demonstration*, "Phronesis", 14 (1969), pp. 123-152; B. T. WILKINS, *Aristotle on Scientific Explanation*, "Dialogue", 9 (1970), pp. 337-355; B. A. BRODY, *Towards an Aristotelian Theory of Scientific Explanation*, "Philosophy of Science", 39 (1972), pp. 20-31; J. JOPE, *Subordinate Demonstrative Science in the Sixth Book of Aristotle's* Physics, "Classical Quarterly", 22 (1972), pp. 279-292; D. J. HADGOPOULOS, *Demonstration and the Second Figure in Aristotle*, "The New Scholasticism", 49 (1975), pp. 62-75; H. S. THAYER, *Aristotle on the Meaning of Science*, "Philosophical Inquiry", 1 (1979), pp. 87-104; T. V. UPTON, *Imperishable Being and the Role of Technical Hypotheses in Aristotelian Demonstration*, "Nature and System", 2 (1980), pp. 91-99; J. HINTIKKA, *Aristotelian Induction*, "Revue Internationale de Philosophie", 34 (1980), pp. 422-439; J. BARNES, *Proof and the Syllogism*, in *Aristotle on Science: The "Posterior Analytics"*, Proceedings of the Eighth Symposium Aristotelicum, Padova 1981, pp. 1-59; M. T. FREEJOHN, *Definition and the Two Stages of Aristotelian Demonstration*, "Review of Metaphysics", 36 (1982), pp. 375-395; A. CASSINI, *La función de la teoria de la demonstración scientifica en Aristoteles*, "Revista Latinoamericana de Filosofia", 14 (1988), pp. 165-177. For an in-depth study of demonstration in St. Thomas see: O. BENNETT, *St. Thomas' Theory of the Demonstrative Proof*, "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association", 16 (1941), pp. 76-88; J. F. ANDERSON, *On Demonstration in Thomistic Metaphysics*, "The New Scholasticism," 32 (1958), pp. 476-494.

[138][138] B. MONDIN, *A History of Mediaeval Philosophy*, Urbaniana University Press, Rome, 1991, p. 320.

The five ways[139][139] as presented in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*, q. 2, a. 3, by St. Thomas are all *a posteriori quia* effect to cause demonstrations of the existence of God.[140][140] All their starting points are facts experienced in the physical world but must then be interpreted metaphysically. All ways utilize causality as their second stage and all conclude to the certainty of God's existence, but only three of them (the first three ways) utilize the third stage (the impossibility of infinite regress), as they are superfluous to the argumentation of the fourth and fifth ways. The five ways are five specifically distinct proofs.[141][141] To see this we must look, not at the formal principle of the demonstration but at the distinct starting points of each and on the basis on which they rest: "One sometimes wonders if the five ways of Thomas Aquinas are but different aspects of one and the same proof or if they constitute five specifically distinct proofs. In my opinion, the proper reply to this question is that the nerve of the proof, the formal principle of the demonstration, is the same in each of the five ways, to wit, the necessity of a cause which is pure Act of Being, itself subsistent in its own right. From this point of view one could say that they form but one proof presented under different modes or aspects. But that which makes a proof is in reality not its formal principle alone, but also its point of departure and the basis on which it rests. And because the proofs of St. Thomas rest on the facts of experience ('philosophic facts'), and because these facts are typically distinct data discerned in the world of experience, it is necessary to say purely and simply that the five ways of Thomas Aquinas

[139][139] For studies on the *Five Ways* in general see the following: A. BERTULETTI, *La prova dell'esistenza di Dio e le cinque vie*, "Aquinas", 9 (1966), pp. 346-359 ; P. BROCH, *Las pruebas tradicionales de la existencia de Dios*, "Ciencia Tomista", 48 (1933), pp. 145-162, 330-343 ; P. BROCH, *Examen de las objeciones contra las cinco pruebas de la existencia de Dios*, "Ciencia Tomista", 49 (1934), pp. 45-58 ; R. J. CONNELL, *Preliminaries to the Five Ways*, in *Thomistic Papers, IV (ed. L. Kennedy C.S.B.),* The Center for Thomistic Studies, Houston, 1988, pp. 129-167 ; L. DEWAN, *The Number and Order of St. Thomas' Five Ways*, "The Downside Review", 92 (1974), pp. 1-18 ; W. DUNPHY, *The "Quinque viae" and Some Parisian Professors of Philosophy*, in *St. Thomas Aquinas: 1274-1974. Commemorative Studies, vol. 2,* Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1974, pp. 73-93 ; J. GARCÍA ALVAREZ, *De Quinque viis Sancti Thomae defensio quaedam*, "Aquinas", 6 (1963), pp. 358-372 ; W. J. HANKEY, *The Place of the Proof for God's Existence in the "Summa Theologiae" of Thomas Aquinas*, "The Thomist", 46 (1982), pp. 370-393 ; C. A. HART, *Participation and the Thomistic Five Ways*, "The New Scholasticism", 26 (1952), pp. 267-282 ; J. F. X. KNASAS, *Thomistic Existentialism and the Silence of the "Quinque Viae"*, "The Modern Schoolman", 63 (1986), pp. 157-171 ; F. LIVERZIANI, *Esperienzialita` delle "cinque vie"? Nota su "Aspetti del Tomismo" di Giorgio Gianini*, "Aquinas", 22 (1979), pp. 414-427 ; E. NICOLETTI, *La struttura delle cinque vie di s. Tommaso*, "Aquinas", 12 (1969), pp. 47-58 ; J. OWENS, *Aquinas and the Five Ways*, "The Monist", 58 (1974), pp. 16-35 ; J. M. SANCHEZ-RUIZ, *Las pruebas de la existencia de Dios en el tomismo*, "Estudios Filosoficos", 6 (1957), pp. 53-96 ; S. VANNI ROVIGHI, *Perenne validità delle "cinque vie" di s. Tommaso*, "Aquinas", 3 (1960), pp. 198-213 ; J. R. WILCOX , *The Five Ways and the Oneness of God*, "The Thomist", 62 (1998), pp. 245-268.

[140][140] For the ancient sources of the Five Ways, see: R. ARNOU, *De Quinque Viis Sancti Thomae ad Demonstrandam Dei Existentiam apud Antiquos Graecos et Arabes et Judaeos Praeformatis vel Adumbratis*, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, 1932.

[141][141] Cajetan, in his commentary on Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3, is of this opinion.

constitute specifically distinct proofs."[142][142] For Maritain, what brings about the distinction between the five ways lies in their starting points.

The five ways all truly demonstrate the existence of God, though their exposition in the *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3 was penned down in summary form without detailed treatment,[143][143] understandable, since these purely philosophical demonstrations are located within a theological setting (the *Summa Theologiae* is Aquinas' theological *magnum opus*). Nevertheless, all the ways conclude to God's real existence.

There are those interpreters of St. Thomas that see no specific order as regards the five ways. There is Motte's[144][144] and Owens' opinion concerning the ordering of these ways that they have nothing necessary about them: "The division into 'five ways' had no special significance for St. Thomas. The division has the earmarks of an apologetic arrangement that could be altered freely to suit the purposes of the moment. The arrangement under the 'five ways,' however, is still the mold in which the arguments considered valid by modern Scholastic writers are usually cast."[145][145]

On the other hand, a number of interpreters of St. Thomas think that the five ways do have a specific order. A. Boehm sees in the five ways merely an order dependent on the current public debate during Aquinas' own lifetime.[146][146] But others like Dewan and Maritain see in the five ways a definite systematic ordering, though some like M. Guérard des Lauriers explain it in function of three types of causality,[147][147] some like Anthony Kenny in function of the Aristotelian four causes,[148][148] others like S. Giuliani and Leo Elders in function of the four causes and the doctrine of *esse*,[149][149] and others like L. Charlier in function of the five types of insufficiency.[150][150]

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[142][142] J. MARITAIN, *op. cit*., pp. 33-34.
[143][143] Cf. J. OWENS, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, Center for Thomistic Studies, Houston, 1985, p. 341
[144][144] A. R. MOTTE, *A propos des 'Cinq Voies,'* "Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques," 27 (1938), pp. 577-582.
[145][145] J. OWENS, *op. cit*., p. 342.
[146][146] A. BOEHM, *Autour du Mystère des Quinque Viae*, "Revue des Sciences Religieuses," 24 (1950), pp. 217-234.
[147][147] M. GUÉRARD DES LAURIERS, *La Preuve de Dieu et les Cinq Voies*, Rome, 1966, pp. 57-68.
[148][148] A. KENNY, *The Five Ways*, London, 1969, pp. 35-37.
[149][149] S. GIULIANI, *Perchè cinque le 'vie' di s. Tommaso?*, "Sapienza," 1 (1948), pp. 153-156 ; L. ELDERS, *The Philosophical Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1990, pp. 85-86
[150][150] L. CHARLIER, *Les Cinq Voies de Saint Thomas. Leur Structure Métaphysique*, in *L'Existence de Dieu*, Cahiers de l'Actualité Religieuse (16), Tournai, 1953, p. 190.

According to Jacques Maritain, "the five ways of Thomas Aquinas not only constitute five typically distinct arguments; but, as the reader has no doubt remarked during the course of this exposition, they also also distributed in a certain order in which the depth of the thought and the complexity of the discussion increase. In proportion as the mind delves deeper into the world of experience in order to reach the first starting point of its thinking, it discerns in the First Being more and more meaningful aspects, and richer perspectives are disclosed to it."[151][151] Lawrence Dewan's position regarding the numbering and ordering of the five ways is very interesting and much more detailed than is Maritain's: the first four ways are developed in accordance with Aristotle's presentation of being as distinguished according to actuality and potentiality. In the "ninth book of the *Metaphysics*, we have, first, a doctrine of three types of being actually: actuality, operation and being imperfectly; and, subsequently, a discussion of being actually or actuality in terms of priority, goodness and truth. Now this is closer to the order of the first four of St. Thomas' ways than would happen by chance. The first way starts from being imperfectly or imperfect actuality, i.e. motion considered as the actuality of the potential or movable. The second way starts from operation, i.e. motion considered in comparison to the motive or operative power. The third way, viewing things as revealed by generation and corruption, considers substantial being or actuality. The fourth way, then, considers things according as one is better than another, truer or more intelligible than another, nobler than (i.e. prior in perfection to) another. Thus the first four ways seem to be constructed on the basis of the Aristotelian doctrine of being, according as 'being' signifies that which is distinguished according to actuality and potentiality…we have a reason for the first four of St. Thomas's five ways, i.e. as regards their order and number. The first three correspond to the three modes of being actually, taken in the order of their knowability for us. In this light, we can understand quite well the only indication of order St. Thomas himself gives us: 'The first and *more manifest way*…' The fourth way, itself multiple, sums up the variety of visions, according to its various properties, of being as distinguished according to actuality and potentiality."[152][152]

If the first four ways are to be considered as a kind of unit, then why is the fifth way included in the list as the final way? Is it a kind of second unit? How does the fifth way add anything more to the the first four? Dewan replies: "The suggestion I wish to make is that, just as we have already considered the first

[151][151] J. MARITAIN, *op. cit*., pp. 62-63.
[152][152] L. DEWAN, *The Number and Order of St. Thomas's Five Ways*, "The Downside Review," 92 (1974), pp. 14, 16-17.

four ways as a kind of unit, so the fifth way constitutes a second unit. Thus, the article would have two main parts, the first four ways and the fifth. Is there any reason, other than the systematic completeness of the first four ways, for positing this two-fold structure? If we wish to capture this duality in as compact a form as possible, we can take the fourth way as summing up the first four. Thus we have God as 'an intelligent kind of being (*aliquid intelligens*), by which all natural beings are ordered to their goal.' This duality, I suggest, corresponds to the plan of the *Summa Theologiae* as a whole. We can see this plan in various texts. The first place seems to be *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 7, where the subject matter of the science St. Thomas calls 'Sacred Doctrine' is under discussion: '…But all [items] are treated in Sacred Doctrine in function of the intelligibility of God, either because they are God Himself, or because they have an order to God, as to their origin and the goal…' And then, at q. 2, prologue, we read: 'Therefore, because the principal intention of this Sacred Doctrine is to communicate the knowledge of God, and not only according as He is in Himself, but also according as He is the origin of things and their goal, and especially of the rational creature…first we shall treat of God; secondly of the movement of the rational creature unto God; thirdly of Christ, who as man is for us the way of tending unto God.

"Now, the consideration concerning God will be tripartite. For first we shall consider those [things] which pertain to the Divine Essence; secondly, those which pertain to the distinction of Persons; thirdly, those which pertain to the coming-forth of creatures from Him.' We see, particularly in the last-quoted paragraph, how 'God in Himself' becomes telescoped with God 'as origin of things,' to constitute the matter of the First Part of the *Summa*; whereas the treatment of God 'as Goal of all' takes on the special form of 'Goal of man,' and constitutes the general subject-matter of the Second and Third Parts of the *Summa*. My suggestion is that the article on the existence of God acquires its over-all order from the fact that it is God, as subject of the science called 'Sacred Doctrine,' whose existence is being demonstrated. Accordingly, one might say that the first four ways constitute a starting-point for the First Part of the *Summa*, whereas the fifth way constitutes a starting-point for the Second and Third Parts. Our explanation of the order of the ways thus, in a way, coincides with the causal explanation, but explains why that explanation, by itself, is inadequate. The duality we see as the larger structure of the article reflects the duality of efficient and final causality, God as beginning and end of all. But the system that has been worked out for the first four ways is the way it is because of the variety proper to being as actuality. Our intention here is to propose the order which St. Thomas himself had in mind in writing the article,

and not merely an order which holds but which escaped his notice. It does not seem to us that, given St. Thomas's interest in questions of order, the interest he showed in sets of proofs for the existence of God, and the carefully polished form which the *Summa* article (I, q. 2, a. 3) has, – it does not seem to us likely that the order we have described was unintended.[153[153]],,154[154]

For Maurice Holloway, there definitely is an ordering of the five ways, they as they succeed one another becoming increasingly metaphysical, becoming more and more involved in the act of being of things: "Each way exploits to a greater degree than the last the actuality of things. Motion, or an existent as changing, is for us the most obvious and manifest characteristic of sensible beings. Thus this evidence constitutes a good starting point; it is a good first way. But in itself such a characteristic of being is the least perfect and least stable manifestation of existential act. For here the very being of change is becoming, the reality of change consisting precisely in an ordering or movement to further being. The second way is more actual than the first, for here our evidence is not the change itself that a being is undergoing in its existence, but the activity that is responsible for such a change. The third way analyzes the natures from which such activity flows, which natures, as possessive of substantial being, are more perfect and stable than the accidental activity they exercise. But in the third way we analyzed these natures from the aspect of their corruptibility and contingency. We considered substantial being precisely as imperfect, namely, as corruptible and contingent. In the fourth way our concern was an explicitly metaphysical one. For in this way we analyzed existents insofar as they manifested perfections that as such involved no imperfection, the minoration of these perfectins being due to the limiting essence in which they were exercised. But the perfections themselves, as considered apart from their limiting principle, had nothing of contingency or imperfection about them. The fifth way, the way of wisdom, is directly concerned with the existent as most actual. Here the transcendent property of being that this way considers is being as good, as perfect; hence, as desirable and therefore as finalizing the activity of natural agents. Thus the causality involved in the fifth way is final causality."[155[155]]

[153[153]] Dewan: "The conception of the plan of this *Summa* article which we have proposed also helps explain why the fifth way is even more summary than the others."
[154[154]] L. DEWAN, *op. cit*., pp. 17-18.
[155[155]] M. HOLLOWAY, *op. cit*., pp. 134-135.

6.2.1. The *A Posteriori Quia* Demonstration from the Motion of Things to God as Unmoved First Mover[156][156]

The starting point of this demonstration is the experience of motion in things, and concludes with the affirmation of the existence of God as the Unmoved First Mover. This is the famous first way of St. Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae*: "The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain and evident to our senses that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is moved is moved by another, for nothing can be moved except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is moved, whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is

[156][156] For in-depth studies on the *First Way* and the Aristotelian Unmoved Mover, see: E. BETTI, *La struttura logica della dimostrazione dell'atto puro in Aristotele*, in *Scritti in onore di Carlo Giacon*, Padua, 1972, pp. 41-62 ; L. ELDERS, *Aristotle's Theology*, Koninklijke Van Gorcum & Comp., Assen, Netherlands, 1972 ; C. GIACON, *L' interpretazione tomistica del motore immobile*, "Studi Tomistici (1): san Tommaso: fonti e riflessi del suo pensiero", Pontificia Accademia di s. Tommaso, Città Nuova, Rome, 1974, pp. 13-29 ; E. GILSON, *Prolégomènes à la prima via*, "AHDLMA", 30 (1964), pp.53-70 ; W. HAMLYN, *Aristotle's God*, in, *The Philosophical Assessment of Theology: Essays in Honor of Fredrick C. Copleston*, ed. Gerard Hughes, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, pp. 17-33 ; J. F. X. KNASAS, *Ad mentem divi Thomae: Does Natural Philosophy Prove God?*, "Divus Thomas", 91 (1988), pp. 408-425 ; J. F. X. KNASAS, *Thomistic Existentialism and the Proofs* Ex Motu *at Contra Gentiles I, C.13*, 59 (1995), pp. 591-615 ; T. J. KONDOLEON, *The Argument from Motion and the Argument for Angels: A Reply to John F. X. Knasas*, 62 (1998), pp. 269-290 ; H. S. LANG, *Aristotle's First Movers and the Relation of Physics and Theology*, "The New Scholasticism", 52 (1978), pp. 500-517 ; N. LOBKOWICZ, *Quidquid Movetur ab Alio Movetur*, "The New Scholasticism", 42 (1968), pp. 401-421 ; N. LUYTEN, *Der erste Weg ex parte motus*, in *Quinque sunt viae*, (ed. L. Elders), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1980, pp. 29-41 ; E. MACCAGNOLO, *Intorno alla prima via di san Tommaso*, in *Studi di filosofia e di storia della filosofia in onore di Francesco Olgiati*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Serie terza, Scienze filosofiche (6), Milan, 1962 ; J. A. McWILLIAMS, *Aristotle on Motion*, "The New Scholasticism", 16 (1942), pp. 285-288 ; J. A. McWILLIAMS, *Aristotelian and Cartesian Motion*, "The New Scholasticism", 17 (1943), pp. 307-321 ; J. OWENS, *The Conclusion of the Prima Via*, "The Modern Schoolman", 30 (1952), pp. 33-53, pp. 109-121, pp. 203-215 ; J. OWENS, *Aquinas and the Proof from the "Physics"*, "Mediaeval Studies", 28 (1966), pp. 118-150 ; J. OWENS, *Actuality in the "Prima Via" of St. Thomas*, "Mediaeval Studies", 29 (1967), pp. 26-46 ; J. OWENS, *The Starting Point of the "Prima Via"*, "Franciscan Studies", 5 (1967), pp. 249-294 ; R. L. PATTERSON, *The Argument from Motion in Aristotle and Aquinas*, "The New Scholasticism", 10 (1936), pp. 245-254 ; A. C. PEGIS, *St. Thomas and the Coherence of the Aristotelian Theology*, "Mediaeval Studies", 35 (1973), pp. 67-117 ; J. SALAMUCHA, *The Proof 'Ex Motu' for the Existence of God: Logical Analysis of St. Thomas' Arguments*, "The New Scholasticism", 32 (1958), pp. 334-372 ; D. STEWART, *Aristotle's Doctrine of the Unmoved Mover*, "The Thomist", 37 (1973), pp. 522-547 ; G. VERBEKE, *La structure logique de la preuve du Premier Moteur chez Aristote*, "RPhL" 46 (1948), pp. 137-160 ; W. A. WALLACE, *Newtonian Antinomies against the Prima Via*, "The Thomist", 19 (1956), pp. 151-192 ; W. WALLACE, *The First Way in Physical and Moral Space*, "The Thomist", 39 (1975), pp. 349-382 ; J. A. WEISHEIPL, *The Principle "omne quod movetur, ab alio movetur"*, "Isis", 56 (1965), pp. 26-45 ; J. A. WEISHEIPL, *Quidquid Movetur ab Alio Movetur: A Reply*, "The New Scholasticism", 42 (1968), pp. 422-431 ; E. WINANCE, *Le premier moteur: "Prima via",* "Doctor Communis", 7 (1954), pp. 4-27.

not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot, but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e., that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is moved must be moved by another. If that by which it is moved be itself moved, then this also must be moved by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover and, consequently, no other mover, seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are moved by the first mover, as the staff moves only because it is moved by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other, and this everyone understands to be God."[157][157]

The point of departure here is the experience of movement or motion in things. Now, motion or movement should be understood in the broad sense of change. Though change includes substantial change, that is, the change from one substance to another, as in the case of wood being turned into ashes by fire, I believe the type of change intended by St. Thomas for his first way primarily regards the most immediately observable change, namely, accidental change, which includes local motion. The accidental changes of sensible things are changes immediately apparent to the senses. In qualitative change, for example, we easily observe the passage from cold water to hot water. In local motion, we see change happening, for example, when a stick is moved from one place to another by the hand. Because movement is a common fact in corporeal reality, Thomas characterizes the *quia* argument from motion as the most manifest way, as one easily experiences the movement of various bodies around him. But it should be noted that the point of departure of the argument from motion is motion not considered physically or scientifically, but metaphysically. What is considered here is a metaphysical explanation of why motion exists in the various corporeal beings in the world.[158][158] "The initial sense experience that provides a starting point for the first way is that 'in the world some things are in motion.' This way is called the more manifest because nothing catches the eye

[157][157] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3.

[158][158] J. OWENS, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, Center for Thomistic Studies, Houston, 1985, p. 345: "The necessity of understanding the argument from motion as a metaphysical argument based upon the reception of being instead of as a physical argument in the Aristotelian sense was strongly emphasized by Suarez (*Disp. Metaph*., XXIX, 1, 8-17). Unless it is interpreted metaphysically, it does not conclude to an uncreated movent. To interpret it metaphysically means to interpret it in terms of being. The movent has to be regarded as the efficient cause that produces movement by imparting existence to the movement and its term. Movement and its formal term are observed to come into being in the sensible world; they have to receive that being from something else, and ultimately from subsistent being. The reasoning is from new existence to subsistent existence."

and holds it more effectively than the sight of some change taking place or of some object moving from place to place. No scientific notion of movement is here at stake. The only fact required at the origin of the demonstration is the sense evidence that, under whatever form, there is motion in the universe. Even if it is sometimes deceived as to what is in motion, sense evidence is, by and large, a safe judge of the fact that there is motion and so long as motion is observable anywhere in the world, the proof retains its necessary starting point. To repeat, the scientific notion of movement is not here at stake. The existence of movement is what counts; what the proof is about is an explanation of the very fact that motion is, or exists. In short, it seeks to find the *cause*, to explain *why* there is motion in the world."[159][159] Our phenomenon of motion or change is considered "with an exquisitely metaphysical procedure, not through mathematical calculations or other procedures proper to the natural sciences."[160][160]

The second constitutive element of the demonstration entails the application of metaphysical causality to the starting point, which is motion or change in things understood metaphysically as the passage from being in potency to being in act. We arrive at the conclusion that that which is moved is moved because of another. Since motion is the transition of a thing from potentiality to actuality, it demands an extrinsic reason of being by which this is put into action and determined or limited. For it is not possible that one and the same thing at the same under the same respect be in potency as it is in act, or that it be the thing moved and the thing moving. Therefore, if a thing is set in motion, it must be set in motion by another. For example, an acorn is potentially an oak tree ; when it later develops into an oak tree is becomes an oak tree actually. But the acorn, potentially an oak tree, had to have come from a previous oak tree in act. Thefore, this acorn that is changing potentially into an oak tree had to be moved by another (the previous oak tree from which the acorn came from). Another example, cold cooking oil starts to become hot. Now, the cooking oil's pasage from being cold to being hot must have been caused by a being already in act, which, in this case, is the fire from the stove. In short, nothing is moved form being in potency to being in act except by a being already in act.

The third constitutive element of the *a posteriori* argument from motion is that it is not possible to proceed into infinity in the matter of those moving and of those moved, that is, it is not possible to go back to infinity through a series

[159][159] E. GILSON, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
[160][160] B. MONDIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322

of movers which are actually and essentially subordinate. It is not possible for motion to have its own sufficient reason in a series, even an infinite series of movers which themselves were being moved. For if all movers receive an influx which they transmit, so that the mover is giving only the motion which it has received, then there never is motion. "In movers and moved things that are ordered, where one, namely, is moved in order by another, it is necessary that if the first mover is removed or ceases from moving, none of the others will either move or be moved. And this is so because the first is the cause of the moving for all the others. But if there are ordered movers and moved things into infinity, there will not be any first mover, but all will be as intermediate movers. And so none of them will be able to be moved. And thus nothing will be moved in the world."[161][161] Having now seen the necessity of positing a first unmoved mover, the mind now concludes to the existence of God.

Objection: The first way demonstration utilizes the doctrine that whatever is moved is moved by another. But men move themselves and so are the cause of their own motion. Thus a man would himself be a first unmoved mover, not God. Therefore, the first way is inconclusive.

Reply to Objection: Men do indeed move themselves but this is so because they are moved by another. For example, John sits up and starts writing. He is clearly moving himself to write. Before he exerted himself he was not writing; he did not have the perfection he has now. We see that John cannot be in act and potency at the same time regarding the same perfection. He is a human being composed of body and soul, a composite being having many "parts." One part is able to move another part but no part is able to give to itself a perfection it does not have. So, before John started writing, as a human being he had the potency or active power to write, and not merely the passive potency to be moved to write like a puppet. One part of John moved another part. John's operative faculty of will moved the nerves in his hand and they moved his hand to write. But the question must be asked: what moved John's will? In the order of final causality it was his desire to write to his best friend about the great places he experienced during his recent trip to France. However, regarding our first way demonstration we are concerned with the adequate efficient causality of a given motion. Where then does the efficacy of the operative power of the will to move the hand originate? We can say from itself since the will is free and has the power to "move itself," but we must also say from another since that very power of the will to move itself has been received from another. This

[161][161] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 13.

"other" is the soul (the substantial form of the body) of which both the will and the intellect are operative faculties, accidents pertaining to its substantial being (the soul is an incomplete substance which, united with another incomplete substance, the body, form the complete substance of the human person). But where did the soul come from? It is not the cause of its own existence, it own being. It must have received its being, its very act of being which actualizes it, which moves it, from another. Again, we cannot go to infinite regress for there would be no first mover to set all others in motion. We come therefore to the Pure Act of Being – God – who has no potentiality in Him whatsoever (and therefore is unmoved or immutable).

6.2.2. The *A Posteriori Quia* Demonstration from Secondary Efficient Causality to God as First Efficient Cause[162][162]

This *quia* demonstration departs from the experience of efficient causality in activity found in the world, and ascends to an affirmation of the existence of God as the First Efficient Cause: "The second way is from the nature of efficient cause. In the world of sensible things we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself, for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause whether the intermediate cause be several or one only. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate, cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes, all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God."[163][163]

The point of departure is our experience of the basic phenomena of efficient causality in the things of this world, in particular, of subordinated *per se* efficient causes, causes being ordered *per se* whenever the virtue of the first

[162][162] For in-depth studies on the *Second Way*, see: P. CAROSI, *La serie infinita di cause efficienti subordinate*, "Divus Thomas," 46 (1943), pp. 29-77, 159-175 ; R. L. CARTWRIGHT, *The Second Way*, "Mediaeval Philosophy and Theology," 5 (1996), pp. 189-204 ; R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *La deuxième preuve de l'existence de Dieu proposée par Saint Thomas*, "Doctor Communis," 7 (1954), pp. 28-40 ; J. R. T. LAMONT, *An Argument for an Uncaused Cause*, "The Thomist," 59 (1995), pp. 261-277 ; R. LAUER, *The Notion of Efficient Cause in the "Secunda Via",* "The Thomist," 38 (1974), pp. 754-767.
[163][163] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3.

cause influences the ultimate effect produced through the intermediary causes. Here the causal influx of the first cause reaches to the ultimate effect by means of other causes. Let us give an example of a subordinated *per se* order of efficient causes: Harry is playing tennis. In this case, Harry's expertise moves his right hand, and his right hand moves the tennis racket, and the tennis racket moves the ball, which is the ultimate effect. In this series of causes the causal influx of Harry's expertise influences the ultimate effect, the moving of the ball, by means of other causes like his hands and his tennis racket. The Angelic Doctor explains: "…two things may be considered in every agent, namely, the thing itself that acts, and the power whereby it acts. Thus fire by its heat makes a thing hot. Now the power of the lower agent depends upon the power of the higher agent, in so far as the higher agent gives the lower agent the power whereby it acts, or preserves that power, or applies it to action. Thus the craftsman applies the instrument to its proper effect, although sometimes he does not give the instrument the form whereby it acts, nor preserves that form, but merely puts it into motion. Consequently, the action of the lower agent must not only proceed from the lower agent through the agent's own power, but also through the power of all the higher agents, for it acts by the power of them all. Now just as the lowest agent is found to be immediately active, so the power of the first agent is found to be immediate in the production of the effect; because the power of the lowest agent does not of itself produce this effect, but by the power of the proximate higher agent, and this by the power of a yet higher agent, so that the power of the supreme agent is found to produce its effect of itself, as though it were the immediate cause."[164][164] The second way deals with essential or *per se* subordinated efficient causes and not *per accidens* ordered causes where the causal influx does not reach down to the ultimate effect, but only to the proximate effect. In the *per se* ordered series of efficient causes the influx of the first cause extends to the production of the ultimate effect through the instrumentality of the intermediate causes. The general characteristics of a *per se* ordered series of efficient causes include: 1. Whenever the effect is produced in the our material cosmos, all the four Aristotelian causes are simultaneously and actually exercising their proper causality; and 2. Not only is the causality of the material, formal, efficient, and final causes properly and simultaneously exercised in the production of the effect, but it is also exercised in the conservation of the effect, that is, in keeping the effect in being. Let us take the example of the *Pietà* sculpted by Michelangelo more than five hundred years ago. Now, the *Pietà* cannot remain in existence, in being, unless its matter (the marble) and form (the form of the statue) be continually actualized, that is,

[164][164] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 70.

unless the very act of being of that sculpted work of art remains. And that act of being had to be efficiency produced by an efficient cause.

Applying metaphysical causality to the point of departure, there is indicated the contingency of subordinated efficient causes and a need for a foundation in a primary and principal efficient cause. It is impossible for a thing to be its own efficient cause, for then it would have to exist before it existed, which is impossible. It should be noted that when we are dealing with efficient causality we are dealing with activity. We observe that things *act*, and by acting they produce effects. They cause, they are efficient or agent causes. To produce means to cause efficiently, to cause an effect efficiently. Now, for a cause to act, it has to be in act, in being, for activity follows being. Nothing causes unless it first of all exists. We must ultimately ask the question: what is the efficient cause of the very existence of the subordinated *per se* ordered efficient causes?

There is then a reference to the principle of the impossibility of proceeding in an infinite series of causes, that is, a progression to an infinity of *per se* ordered efficient causes is impossible. An infinite regress would mean no first cause. But if there would be no first efficient cause then there could be also no ultimate effect because there would be no causal influx which produced the effect. "In all ordered efficient causes, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, whether one or many, and this is the cause of the last cause. But, when you supress a cause, you suppress its effect. Therefore, if you suppress the first cause, the intermediate cause cannot be a cause. Now, if there were an infinite regress among efficient causes, no cause would be first. Therefore, all the other causes, which are intermediate, will be suppressed. But this is manifestly false."[165][165] The conclusion, that a First Efficient Cause, which is God, exists, must therefore be admitted.

6.2.3. The *A Posteriori Quia* Demonstration from Contingent Being to God as Necessary Being[166][166]

[165][165] *Suma Contra Gentiles*, I, 13, no. 33.

[166][166] For in-depth studies on the *Third Way*, see: G. BLANDINO, *The Existence of God. The Proof "From Contingent Beings to the Absolute Being"*, "Aquinas", 38 (1995), pp. 529-552 ; L. CHAMBAT, *La "Tertia via" dans Saint Thomas et Aristote*, "Revue Thomiste", 32 (1927), pp. 334-338 ; T. K. CONNOLLY, *The Basis of the Third Proof for the Existence of God*, "The Thomist", 17 (1954), pp. 281-349 ; U. DEGL'INNOCENTI, *La validità della "terza via"*, "Doctor Communis", 7 (1954), pp. 41-70 ; R. B. EDWARDS, *The Validity of Aquinas' Third Way*, "The New Scholasticism", 45 (1971), pp. 117-126 ; R. B. EDWARDS, *Another Visit to the "Third Way"*, "The New Scholasticism", 47 (1973), pp. 100-104 ; M. GONZALEZ, *El problema de las fuentes de la "Tercera Via" de Santo Tomás de Aquino*, Madrid, 1961 ; H. HOLSTEIN, *L' origine aristotélicienne de la "tertia via" de saint Thomas*, "RPhL", 48 (1950), pp. 354-370 ;

The point of departure of this demonstration is the experience of the diverse degrees of non-necessity in the things of the visible world, and concludes with the affirmation of the existence of God as the Necessary Being: "The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated and to be corrupted, and consequently it is possible for them to be and not to be. But it is impossible for them always to exist, for that which can not-be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything can not-be, then at one time nothing was in existence. Now, if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist begins to exist only through something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist, and thus even now nothing would be in existence – which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their existence caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore, we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God."[167][167]

The constitutive elements of the *tertia via* are the following: 1. The demonstration's point of departure is the experience of the diverse degrees of non-necessity of the things in this world. We find that there are many things in the world that can not-be, that is, things like men, plants, and animals come into being and then die or corrupt. The philosopher of nature will tell you that the

G. JALBERT, *Nécessité et contingence chez saint Thomas d'Aquin et chez ses prédécesseurs*, Ottawa, 1961 ; C. J. KELLY, *The Third Way and the Possible Eternity of the World*, "The New Scholasticism", 56 (1982), pp. 273-291 ; T. A. F. KELLY, *Ex possibili et necessario: A Re-examination of Aquinas' Third Way*, "The Thomist", 61 (1997), pp. 63-84 ; J. F. X. KNASAS, *"Necessity" in the Tertia Via*, "The New Scholasticism", 52 (1978), pp. 373-394 ; J. F. X. KNASAS, *Making Sense of the "Tertia Via"*, "The New Scholasticism", 54 (1980), pp. 476-511 ; T. KONDOLEON, *The Third Way: Encore*, "The Thomist", 44 (1980), pp. 325-356 ; T. MIYAKAWA, *The Value and the Meaning of the "Tertia Via" of St. Thomas Aquinas*, "Aquinas", 6 (1963), pp. 239-295 ; D. O' DONOGHUE, *An Analysis of the Tertia Via of St. Thomas*, "The Irish Theological Quarterly", 20 (1952), pp. 129-151 ; J. OWENS, *"Cause of Necessity" in Aquinas' "Tertia Via"*, "Mediaeval Studies", 33 (1971), pp. 21-45 ; J. OWENS, *"Quandoque" and "Aliquando" in Aquinas' "Tertia Via"*, "The New Scholasticism", 54 (1980), pp. 447-475 ; C. G. PRADO, *The Third Way Revisited*, "The New Scholasticism", 45 (1971), pp. 495-501 ; J. M. QUINN, *The Third Way to God: A New Approach*, "The Thomist", 42 (1978), pp. 50-68 ; J. M. QUINN, *A Few Reflections on "The Third Way: Encore"*, "The Thomist", 42 (1978), pp. 75-91 ; J. H. WALGRAVE, *Tertia via*, in *Quinque sunt viae*, (ed. L. Elders), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1980, pp. 65-74.

[167][167] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3.

reason why corporeal beings corrupt is because they are composites of matter and form, and prime matter is the source of the possibility of corruption.

In the second part of our demonstration there is a definition of the contingency of that which does not possess being necessarily, but only provisionally (of that which is generated and corrupted), through a reference to a formulation of metaphysical efficient causality: what does not exist begins to exist only thanks to something that is.

We see that the beings having prime matter in them are generated and corrupted and are therefore not necessary. They can or can not-be. Would it be possible that all the substances in the cosmos be like this? If they all might or might not be, there is no reason why they should exist at all. Nothing then would exist, which of course contradicts evidence. If none of them has come to be necessarily, then what makes them be, what makes them exist? What follows from this scenario is that there must be some beings which are not like them, existing necessarily, which cannot not-be. For, if it were possible for all beings to be or not to be, none of them would be. Therefore, there must be some beings which are necessary.

Now, this necessity can be in itself or coming from another. So necessary beings are either necessary in themselves or thanks to another. But we cannot go to infinity as regards necessary beings that receive their necessity from another, our application of the third constitutive element of the *a posteriori* demonstration of the existence of God. Why? We know that existence or being is predicated of everything that is. Now, when a common perfection is predicated of two beings, it is not possible that that perfection be predicated of neither by way of causality. One of the beings must be the cause of the other, or some third being must be the cause of the perfection of both. Therefore, it is impossible for two beings that are, that one of them should not have a cause of its being or existence. It is either that both exist through the third cause or that one is the cause of the other. Thus, everything that is, to the extent that it is, must receive its being from that cause which has no cause of being. God is the Absolutely Necessary Being, who does not take from others His own necessity, but is the Cause of the necessity of all things. God has intrinsic and extrinsic necessity. He not only possess in Himself no potency whatsoever for non-being, but His act of being itself is unreceived. He is the Subsistent Being, infinite and necessary in the order of being.

6.2.4. The *A Posteriori Quia* Demonstration from Grades of Perfection in Things to God as Supremely Perfect Being[168][168]

This *quia* demonstration departs from the experience of degrees of transcendental perfections in the things of the world. The starting point regards the pure transcendentals of being. The transcendentals of being, such as one, true, good, and beautiful, are analogous perfections of being, transcending the categories, not being generic or specific perfections (which are univocal and do not admit of gradation). The demonstration will conclude with the affirmation of God as the Supremely Perfect Being, the Exemplary Cause of the degrees of participating transcendental perfections, who is also the universal First Efficient Cause of all perfections in all finite beings: "The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like. But *more* and *less* are predicated of different things according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest, and, consequently, something which is most being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in the *Metaphysics*. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all

[168][168] For in-depth studies on the *Fourth Way*, see: J. BOBIK, *Aquinas' Fourth Way and the Approximating Relation*, "The Thomist", 51 (1987), pp. 17-36 ; L. BOGLIOLO, *La chiave risolutiva del problema dell'essere: la IV "via" di s. Tommaso*, "Doctor Communis", 41 (1988), pp. 3-17 ; H. BONAMARTINI, *La quarta via di san Tommaso d'Aquino*, "La Scuola Cattolica" 60 (1932), pp. 17-24 ; P. M. BORDOY-TORRENTS, *Introduccion al estudio de la "Cuarta via" de Santo Tomas*, "La Ciencia Tomista", 61 (1941), pp. 273-284 ; P. M. BORDOY-TORRENTS, *Estudios sobre la "Cuarta via" de Santo Tomas de Aquino*, "La Ciencia Tomista", 63 (1942), pp. 30-43 ; J. M. BRADY, *Note on the Fourth Way*, "The New Scholasticism", 48 (1974), pp. 219-232 ; L. CHAMBAT, *La "quarta via" de Saint Thomas*, "Revue Thomiste" 33 (1928), pp. 412-422 ; M. CORVEZ, *La quatrieme voie vers l'existence de Dieu selon saint Thomas*, in *Quinque sunt viae*, Pontificia Accademia di s. Tommaso, "Studi Tomistici" (9), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1980, pp. 75-83 ; V. DE COUESNONGLE, *La causalite du maximum. L'utilisation par Saint Thomas d' un passage d' Aristote*, "Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques", 38 (1954), pp. 433-444, 658-680 ; V. DE COUESNONGLE, *Mesure et causalite dans la "quarta via"*, "Revue Thomiste", 58 (1958), pp. 55-75, 244-284 ; L. DEWAN, *St. Thomas' Fourth Way and Creation*, "The Thomist" 59 (1995), pp. 371-378 ; M. A. DONOVAN, *Logic and Mystery in the "Quarta Via" of St. Thomas*, "The Thomist", 19 (1956), pp. 22-58 ; C. FABRO, *Sviluppo, significato e valore della "IV via"*, "Doctor Communis" 7 (1954), pp. 71-109 ; C. FABRO, *Il fondamento metafisico della "IV via"*, "Doctor Communis", 18 (1965), pp. 49-70 ; G. GIANNINI, *La quarta via tomistica in prospettiva agostiniana*, "Studi Tomistici" (1), Città Nuova, Rome, 1974 ; R. LAVATORI, *La quarta via di s. Tommaso d'Aquino secondo il principio dell'ordine*, "Divinitas", 16 (1974), pp. 62-87 ; T. MIYAKAWA, *Significato e valore della IV via nella Summa Theologiae di san Tommaso*, "Divinitas", 11 (1967), pp. 627-649 ; J. S. MORREAL, *Aquinas' Fourth Way*, "Sophia", 18 (1979), pp. 20-28 ; F. MUNIZ, *La "quarta via" de Santo Tomas para demostrar la existencia de Dios*, "Revista de Filosofia", 3 (1944), pp. 385-433 ; 4 (1945), pp. 48-101 ; E. NICOLETTI, *Riflessioni metafisiche sulla quarta via di s. Tommaso*, "Lateranum" 29 (1963), pp. 73-88 ; C. PANDOLFI, *Ricerca sulle implicazioni metafisiche ed "esistenziali" della "quarta via" di san Tommaso d'Aquino*, "Aquinas", 38 (1995) ; F. De VIANA, *"Quarta via" y causalidad ejemplar*, "Estudios filosoficos", 11 (1962), pp. 415-443.

in that genus, as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things, as is said in the same book. Therefore, there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection, and this we call God."[169][169]

The constitutive elements of the *quarta via* are the following: 1. The point of departure of the proof are the various degrees of pure transcendental perfections like transcendental unity, truth, goodness and beauty found in things. 2. Applying exemplary causality to the various degrees of pure transcendental perfections in things, there is manifested the fact that it is the highest perfection, the *Maxime Ens*, which is the Supreme Exemplar, Unlimited Perfection, the source of the intelligibility of the lesser degrees of the same perfection existing in different natures.[170][170] By exemplary causality one ascends from the various degrees of pure transcendental perfections in things to the affirmation of the *Maxime Ens*, the Supreme Exemplar, the Exemplary Cause of the degrees of transcendental perfections in the participating beings which imitate the Supreme Exemplar in varying degrees.[171][171] With the

[169][169] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3. The above English translation is by Anton C. Pegis, for many years President of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto (A. C. PEGIS, *Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Random House, New York 1948; *The Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 2 vols., Random House, New York, 1945). The translation is approved by Étienne Gilson and is used by him in his 1963 Mentor-Omega edition of *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (pp. 80-81).

[170][170] I retain, with Holloway, that the degrees of transcendental perfections depend for their intelligibility upon the supreme degree as the only explanation for the intelligibility of the lesser degrees. These minorated degrees cannot contain within themselves their complete intelligibility. As there are various degrees of the same transcendental perfection to be found in different things, this perfection must be participated and is therefore incomplete and dependent upon something other than itself. The intelligibility itself of this order among these transcendental perfections would have no meaning unless there exists at the same time a supreme degree of this perfection and unless that supreme perfection be in itself by essence unparticipated and absolutely subsistent. The existence of the various degrees of analogous pure transcendental perfections is rendered intelligible only on the supposition that there exists a Being who possesses these perfections in the absolute or supreme degree.

[171][171] I agree with Maurice Holloway's position which retains that "The fact from which we argue is the actual existence of different degrees of the same perfection. This existential experience is a composite and an intelligible one: the existence of many beings possessing the same perfection according to more and less. Reflecting upon this fact, we conclude that these grades would be unintelligible if there did not exist a maximum grade. Why is this so? Because perfections that are found in a deficient state are not in themselves adequately intelligible. They are intelligible only because they are more or less like that which is perfectly this perfection. Such perfections hold their intelligibility to the exact degree to which they approach or recede from the unlimited perfection in which they share. A thing is intelligible to the degree that it is and in the way that it is. We have seen that these perfections are not intelligible because of the nature in which they are found. For here the nature or essence is related to the perfection as receiver to thing received, as potency to act. And act neither is, nor is intelligible, through potency. It is the other way around: potency is and is intelligible through act. Hence, the intelligibility of the different degrees of the same perfection is not accounted for by the nature or essence that limits it. Rather, as act, the perfection renders intelligible the nature that limits it.

"Nor can these more or less limited acts *of themselves* account for their intelligibility as limited. For of themselves *they should not be limited*. Here we are at the heart of the matter. Two things should be noted about each degree of the perfections. First, it is minorated (that is, it is not the highest degree since it is found in a limited condition), and, secondly, of itself it should not be limited (since, of itself, it says *only act* and in no way

conclusion of the first part of the fourth way with the affirmation of the existence of the *Maxime Ens*, the demonstration of the existence of God is formally complete. Its operating procedure is explicitly by way of exemplary causality.[172][172] 3. The second part of the *quarta via* from the words "the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus" to the end of the text with the identification of the First Cause with God, operates through efficient causality. The efficient causality argument of the second part renders explicit what was only implicit in the first part; that is, that the Supreme Exemplar is also the First Efficient Cause. The second part affirms that the Supremely

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potency). As act, it accounts for the intelligibility of its limiting potency, for apart from its act, or its intrinsic order to its act, potency has no intelligibility. But what accounts for the actuality of the limited perfection? Only the fact that all these degrees participate in the same unlimited degree of the perfection. The conclusion is a simple but necessary one: unless there exists here and now the unlimited degree of this perfection, the limited degrees have no reason for being, and hence have no intelligibility as limited degrees of the same perfection. The source of the intelligibility of these minorated degrees of the same perfection cannot be the natures that limit them nor their own condition as act, but only the existence of the unlimited, unreceived, degree. This unlimited degree must, therefore, exist. In the fourth way we reach God under the aspect of unlimited Being.

"Just as in the second way, the activity of finite beings is rendered intelligible only on the supposition that there exists an uncaused cause that is its own activity; and just as in the third way contingent beings are rendered intelligible only on the supposition that there exists an absolutely necessary Being who is its own necessary existence; so, here in the fourth way, the existence of different grades of perfection is rendered intelligible only on the supposition that there exists a Being who possesses these perfections in an ungraded or absolute degree. With the positing of this absolute degree the proof of the fourth way is completed." (M. HOLLOWAY, *An Introduction to Natural Theology*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York 1959, pp. 126-127).

Holloway also poses an objection and gives his reply which is useful for a better understanding of the explicit exemplary causality position for the first part of the Fourth Way: "*Objection*: If the different degrees of the same perfection depend upon the supreme degree of that perfection for their intelligibility, then the intellect must first know this supreme degree before it can know the lesser degrees. Hence, the fourth way does not prove, but supposes the existence of God. *Reply*: This objection is answered by a simple distinction. If one means that degrees of perfection are not intelligible to us unless we first know the supreme degree, this must be denied. But if one means that these degrees of perfection are not intelligible in themselves unless some supreme degree exists, the statement is true. It is a fact that we have knowledge of these degrees of perfection; hence, they are intelligible to us. And the intellect understands that in themselves these degrees would not be intelligible unless there existed some supreme degree. Hence, for our intellect, the knowledge of this supreme degree constitutes a necessary *term*. But in itself this supreme degree is the first cause of the intelligibility of the other degrees and, indeed, of the very being of the graded perfections." (M. HOLLOWAY, *op. cit*. pp. 129-130).

[172][172] I hold, together with Brady, that exemplary causality is explicitly involved in the first part of the Fourth Way, for it is the intrinsic intelligibility of being that requires the existence of the *Maxime Ens* as the ultimate reason explaining the fact that the existing things we experience are in fact *graded* things. Such an ultimate reason emerges not as an efficient cause as the graded things we experience are not being viewed, in the first part of the *quarta via*, as proceeding from their cause (things proceed from an efficient cause), but rather as *imitating*, as *being measured by*, their cause (things imitate, are measured by, an exemplary cause), as being more and less in approximative reference to a most. I hold, together with Holloway, that efficient causality is also involved in the first part (albeit implicitly) for from it flows the very act of being of the perfections which are found in varying degrees in beings. The *Maxime Ens*, God, is not just the Exemplar Cause of the intelligibility of the degrees of pure transcendental perfections but is also at the same time the Efficient Cause of the very being of these graded perfections. But what is directly and explicitly considered in the first part is the intelligibility of the graded pure transcendental perfections. Hence the explicit exemplary causality position for the first part.

Perfect Being is the First Efficient Cause of the being, goodness, and all the perfections in each and every thing. This First Efficient Cause is none other than God.

6.2.5. The *A Posteriori Quia* Demonstration from Order and Design in Natural Beings to God as the Supreme Intelligent Orderer of the Universe[173][173]

The point of departure of this *quia* demonstration is the experience of finalized order in the non-intelligent natural things of the universe. The demonstration concludes with an affirmation of the existence of God as the Supreme Intelligent Orderer of the universe: "The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence, as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end, and this being we call God."[174][174]

The *quinta via* demonstration of the existence of God consists in these fundamental steps: 1. The point of departure is the experience of the fact that the natural things in the world that lack intelligence are ordered towards an end; 2. There is then the designation of the phenomena of contingency in the sub-rational world. We observe that things which lack knowledge operate for an end, as appears from the fact that they always or nearly always operate in the same way so as to reach their end. So it appears that their finalization is not by mere chance but is, rather, preordained. Through the application of the principle of causality, there is evidenced the contingency of the phenomenon of finality, and subsequently, sub-rational finalism requires a Being gifted with intelligence who produces it. Things which lack intelligence tend to their finalized end by the direction of an intelligent Being, who orders them to their ends. "We are in a world in which by far the greatest number of events and of activities exhibit a regularity that cannot be the result of chance. On the other hand, an immense

[173][173] For in-depth studies on the *Fifth Way*, see: R. L. FARICY, *The Establishment of the Basic Principle of the Fifth Way*, "The New Scholasticism", 31 (1957), pp. 189-208 ; P. PARENTE, *La quinta via di s. Tommaso*, "Doctor Communis", 7 (1954), pp. 110-130 ; F. De VIANA, *La "quinta via" de Santo Tomás para demostrar la existencia de Dios*, "Estudios filosoficos", 8 (1959), pp. 37-99 ; L. VICENTE-BURGOA, *Los problemas de la "quinta via" para demostrar la existencia de Dios*, "Divus Thomas", 84 (1981), pp. 3-37.
[174][174] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 3.

number of these events and operations originate with beings that are not endowed with knowledge. Consequently, the cause of the regularity, order, and purposiveness present in the world is not to be found within these beings themselves. There must therefore be, outside and above the domain of these beings, some being 'endowed with knowledge and intelligence' by which they are directed toward their ends, 'as the arrow is directed by the archer'"[175[175]]; and finally, 3. We infer the existence of a Supreme Orderer, God, the intelligent Being who orders all natural things to their ends. "It is ultimately necessary to come at last to an intellect which has the intention of the ends to which things and their natures tend, and which brings that intention into being, not only at the origin of the world, but incessantly, without itself depending, either for existence or for the activation of things and natures towards their ends, on another intellect which precedes it in being. In other words, it is necessary to come at last to a transcendent First Cause, the existing of which is its very intellection, and which directs things toward their ends – without itself being subject to the causality of any end – through the very act by which it wills its own goodness, which is its very being."[176[176]]

B. THE NATURE OF GOD

6.3. Our Analogical Way of Knowing God

Our knowledge of God is not direct (*cognitio propria*, which comprehends an object through its own mental form [*per speciem propriam*] or by immediate vision) but indirect and analogical (*cognitio analoga* or *analogica*, which comprehends an object through an alien form [*per speciem alienam*]). When we say that God is wise and that man is wise, wisdom here is predicated of its subjects in ways that are partly the same and partly different. God *is* wisdom while man merely *has* wisdom. When we say that God is Being and that a man is a being, we mean that God is the Necessary Being while a man merely *has* being, merely participates in the act of being given to him by God. Again, being here is predicated of its subjects in ways that are partly similar and partly dissimilar. "In the cognition of God in this world we apply concepts gained from created things to God on the ground of a certain similarity and ordination of the created things to Him as their efficient and exemplary cause. There is a relation of analogy between the creature and the Creator which is founded on the fact that the creature is necessarily made to the likeness of the Creator. This analogy is the basis of all natural knowledge of God (cf. Wisdom

[175[175]] É. GILSON, *op. cit*., p. 85.
[176[176]] J. MARITAIN, *op. cit*., p. 58.

13:5)…Despite this analogy or similarity, there is a much greater dissimilarity between the creature and the Creator, namely the dissimilarity between the finite and the infinite."[177][177]

The triple modes of our analogical knowledge of God is that of affirmation, negation, and eminence: 1. *The Way of Affirmation* (or causality). Here one affirms of God the various perfections found in creatures; a perfection that we find in creatures is affirmed of Him who is the Cause of that perfection in creatures. By observing an effect we may come to a certain knowledge of its efficient Cause, as in observing, for example, a painting we may come to a knowledge of the painter. Thus, by observing that a man is wise we may say that God (the efficient cause of that perfection) is wise. This way proceeds from the consideration that God is the efficient cause of all things, and that the efficient cause contains in itself every perfection which is in the effect. God, the Originator of all creatures, possesses every true perfection of the creatures; 2. *The Way of Negation*. In this way we deny to God the limited and imperfect manner in which one finds the certain perfection in creatures. The finiteness of creatural perfections must dissappear so that such perfections may then be applied to Him. We say, therefore, that God is not wise (in the sense of human wisdom, since His wisdom is not our wisdom); and lastly, 3. *The Way of Eminence*. One predicates the perfection of God in a mode that is infinite or eminent: one attributes to Him a determinate perfection according to the subsistent and infinite mode that is proper only to the Divinity. We say, therefore, that God is infinitely or eminently wise, etc.

6.4. The Simplicity of God

The highest level of unity in the hierarchy of degrees of transcendental unity is the Absolute Divine Simplicity of God. The unity of simplicity is the unity of a being devoid of parts or of a multiplicity of constituent principles and elements. God does not have any parts, nor does He have a multiplicity of constituent principles, nor is He compounded of elements. There is absolutely no physical or metaphysical composition or compounding in God. Neither is there compounding or composition of genus and specific difference in Him.[178][178]

God is not a body. There is no material composition in God, for He is Spirit. He is without motion or change, being the changeless Necessary Being.

[177][177] L. OTT, *The Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, Tan Books, Rockford, IL., 1974, p. 19.
[178][178] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 28.

God is Pure Act of Being, devoid of any potentiality whatsoever.[179][179] Against those who would have matter in the Supreme Being to explain His individuality, it must be said that, as God is not a corporeal substance, He is not composed, as all corporeal bodies are, of prime matter and substantial form, He Being Pure Act, devoid of potentiality whatsoever.[180][180] There can be no passive potency in God.[181][181] He is not matter for matter is pure potency while He is Pure Act, without potentiality.[182][182]

God cannot be composed of an essence or nature and a subject which receives that nature, as He is identical to His essence or nature. As God is not a material body, He cannot be composed, as a material body always is, of an essence or nature concreted in an individual subject. A corporeal body has a nature or essence, but it isn't its own nature. God is His own essence.[183][183] He does not *have* anything by participation, but *is* the unparticipated Being by essence. If He *had* some kind of perfection by participation, He would have to be in potentiality towards having it, and He would have to receive it from some prior being superior to it in act. But this is impossible for there is no being prior to the First Being. Being Pure Act of Being, God is His own essence, His own life, His own divinity, and whatever else may be predicated of Him. Therefore, there cannot be in God a compounding of nature with the *suppositum* that possesses that nature.[184][184] He is His own *Essence*.

All finite beings are necessarily composed of essence (which receives the act of being and limits it) and act of being. In God, instead, there is a real identification between *essentia* and act of being (*esse*).[185][185] "This may be shown in several ways. First, whatever a thing has besides its essence must be caused either by the constituent principles of that essence (like a property that necessarily accompanies the species – as the faculty of laughing is proper to a man – and is caused by the constituent principles of the species), or by some exterior agent – as heat is caused in water by fire. Therefore, if the act of being (*esse*) of a thing differs from its essence, this act of being (*esse*) must be caused either by some exterior agent or by its essential principles. Now it is impossible for a thing's act of being (*esse*) to be caused by its essential constituent principles, for nothing can be the sufficient cause of its own act of being (*esse*),

[179][179] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 1, c.
[180][180] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 2, c.
[181][181] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 16.
[182][182] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 17.
[183][183] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 21.
[184][184] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 3, c.
[185][185] Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 22.

if its act of being (*esse*) is caused. Therefore that thing, whose act of being (*esse*) differs from its essence, must have its act of being (*esse*) caused by another. But this cannot be true of God; because we call God the first efficient cause. Therefore it is impossible that in God His act of being (*esse*) should differ from His essence. Secondly, act of being (*esse*) is that which makes every form or nature actual; for goodness and humanity are spoken of as actual, only because they are spoken of as existing. Therefore act of being (*esse*) must be compared to essence, if the latter is a distinct reality, as actuality to potentiality. Therefore, since in God there is no potentiality, as shown above (a. 1), it follows that in Him essence does not differ from act of being (*esse*). Therefore His essence is His act of being (*esse*). Thirdly, because, just as that which has fire, but is not itself fire, is on fire by participation; so that which has act of being (*esse*) but is not act of being (*esse*), is a being by participation. But God is His own essence, as shown above (a. 3) if, therefore, He is not His own act of being (*esse*) He will be not essential, but participated being. He will not therefore be the first being – which is absurd. Therefore God is His own act of being (*esse*), and not merely His own essence."[186][186]

6.5. The Perfection of God

God is absolutely perfect: "All created perfections are in God. Hence He is spoken of as universally perfect, because He lacks not (says the Commentator, *Metaph.* v.) any excellence which may be found in any genus. This may be seen…from what has already been proved, God is being itself, of itself subsistent (q. 3, a. 4.). Consequently, He must contain within Himself the whole perfection of being. For it is clear that if some hot thing has not the whole perfection of heat, this is because heat is not participated in its full perfection; but if this heat were self-subsisting, nothing of the virtue of heat would be wanting to it. Since therefore God is subsisting being itself, nothing of the perfection of being can be wanting to Him. Now all created perfections are included in the perfection of being; for things are perfect, precisely so far as they have being after some fashion. It follows therefore that the perfection of no one thing is wanting to God."[187][187]

6.6. The Goodness of God

[186][186] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 4, c.
[187][187] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 4, a. 2, c.

God is goodness itself: "'The good is that which all things desire.' The Philosopher introduces this remark as a 'felicitous saying' in *Ethics* I.[188][188] But all things, each according to its mode, desire to be in act; this is clear from the fact that each thing according to its nature resists corruption. To be in act, therefore, constitutes the nature of the good. Hence it is that evil, which is opposed to the good, follows when potency is deprived of act, as is clear from the Philosopher in *Metaphysics* IX.[189][189] But, as we have shown, God is being in act without potency.[190][190] Therefore, He is truly good (…) From this we can conclude that God is His goodness. To be in act is for each being its good. But God is not only a being in act; He is His very act of being, as we have shown.[191][191] God is, therefore, *goodness itself*, and not only *good*.

6.7. The Infinity of God

God is absolutely infinite: "A thing is called infinite because it is not finite (limited). Now matter is in a way made finite by form, and the form by matter. Matter indeed is made finite by form, inasmuch as matter, before it receives its form, is in potentiality to many forms; but on receiving a form, it is terminated by that one. Again, form is made finite by matter, inasmuch as form, considered in itself, is common to many; but when received in matter, the form is determined to this one particular thing. Now matter is perfected by the form by which it is made finite; therefore infinite as attributed to matter, has the nature of something imperfect; for it is as it were formless matter. On the other hand, form is not made perfect by matter, but rather is contracted by matter; and hence the infinite, regarded on the part of the form not determined by matter, has the nature of something perfect. Now being is the most formal of all things, as appears from what is shown above (q. 4, a. 1, ob. 3). Since therefore the divine being is not a being received in anything, but He is His own subsistent being as was shown above (q. 3, a. 4), it is clear that God Himself is infinite and perfect."[192][192]

6.8. The Immutability of God

God is absolutely immutable, that is, changeless: "From what precedes, it is shown that God is altogether immutable. First, because it was shown above that there is some first being, whom we call God; and that this first being must

[188][188] ARISTOTLE, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 1 (1094a 3).
[189][189] ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, IX, 9 (1051a 4).
[190][190] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 15.
[191][191] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 22.
[192][192] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 7, a. 1, c.

be pure act, without the admixture of any potentiality, for the reason that, absolutely, potentiality is posterior to act. Now everything which is in any way changed, is in some way in potentiality. Hence it is evident that it is impossible for God to be in any way changeable. Secondly, because everything which is moved, remains as it was in part, and passes away in part; as what is moved from whiteness to blackness, remains the same as to substance; thus in everything which is moved, there is some kind of composition to be found. But it has been shown above (q. 3, a. 7) that in God there is no composition, for He is altogether simple. Hence it is manifest that God cannot be moved. Thirdly, because everything which is moved acquires something by its movement, and attains to what it had not attained previously. But since God is infinite, comprehending in Himself all the plenitude of perfection of all being, He cannot acquire anything new, nor extend Himself to anything whereto He was not extended previously. Hence movement in no way belongs to Him. So, some of the ancients, constrained, as it were, by the truth, decided that the first principle was immovable."[193][193]

6.9. The Eternity of God

God is eternal. "The idea of eternity follows immutability, as the idea of time follows movement, as appears from the preceding article. Hence, as God is supremely immutable, it supremely belongs to Him to be eternal. Nor is He eternal only; but He is His own eternity; whereas, no other being is its own duration, as no other is its own being. Now God is His own uniform being; and hence as He is His own essence, so He is His own eternity."[194][194]

6.10. The Unity of God

God is supremely one. He is absolute unity. "Since *one* is an undivided being, if anything is supremely *one* it must be supremely being, and supremely undivided. Now both of these belong to God. For He is supremely being, inasmuch as His being is not determined by any nature to which it is adjoined; since He is being itself, subsistent, absolutely undetermined. But He is supremely undivided inasmuch as He is divided neither actually nor potentially, by any mode of division; since He is altogether simple, as was shown above (q. 3, a. 7). Hence it is manifest that God is *one* in the supreme degree."[195][195]

[193][193] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 9, a. 1, c.
[194][194] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 10, a. 2.
[195][195] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 11, a. 4, c.

6.11. The Most Proper Name of God: *He Who Is*

The 'Physical Essence' of God. *Essence* is that which makes a thing to be what it is. It is by one's proper essence that a man is a man, a horse is horse, a rock is rock, and not any other individual being. The essences of individual things imply a specific mode or manner of being of individual things. All individual created beings have, as a common property, the act of being (*esse*) but are at the same time differentiated by their respective essences or natures. Essence is defined *as that by which a thing is what it is*. It is the immediate and proper potency of the act of being which, together with *esse,* constitutes the substance, conferring upon it a specific way of being.

What about the term *physical* utilized in our complex term *physical essence*? *Physical* is really Greek for *natural*, as the Greek noun *physis* means *nature* The 'physical essence' of a thing is the sum of perfections or elements that constitute it in its proper being, independently of the view of the mind that knows it. It is an essence as it exists or is existible in the order of things outside the mind. The 'physical essence' of man, for example, is 'hylemorphic composite of body and soul.' This is the *physical definition* of man. The 'physical essence' of God would be the *totality of the Divine perfections which are factually identical among themselves*. We should note that *physical* here is not to be identified with *corporeal* or *material*, as Paul Glenn explains: "God is not like the sun in the sky or like a man in the street; it is clear that God is not *bodily*. Therefore, let us eradicate sternly from our minds the too common error which identifies in meaning the terms *physical* and *bodily*, or the terms *physical* and *material*. It is true that we often use the phrase 'the physical order' to indicate the realm of bodily things. But the term *physical* strictly means 'natural' or 'pertaining to nature,' and a spiritual being has its nature as truly as a bodily being. The custom of speaking of 'the physical order' when we mean the bodily universe and all that pertains to it, is easily explained. For the most obvious *natures* are those that lie all around us demanding our attention and obtruding themselves on our notice. Hence, the phrase, 'the physical order,' is really an elliptical phrase, a handy substitute for the more cumbrous expression, 'the order of bodily *physes* or natures.' We may use this phrase as we like, but let us keep clear minds the while and refuse to take *physical* as a synonym for *bodily* or *material*. As a convenient check and reminder, we may frequently recall the fact that the *physical* parts of a man (that is, his *essential* physical parts) are his body and his soul, and the soul is spiritual, not material or bodily. And so, when we come to discuss the physical essence of God, we are not to be

nonplussed by the term *physical* used in this connection, and to feel that there must be some mistake about the whole business."[196][196]

The 'Metaphysical Essence' of God. In giving a physical definition of a thing one defines it by a listing of its necessary elements or parts. One is concerned with how it is made up. In giving a 'metaphysical definition' of a thing or in the definition of a thing's 'metaphysical essence,' one is concerned instead with what that something means. One lists the essential notes of the idea in which it is known. A 'metaphysical essence' is "that item or element in the reality under examination (radically present to the reality but not necessarily a formal part in the reality) which evokes in the mind which knows the reality a true and penetrating knowledge of it, and which serves the mind as the basis of all that is essentially referable to the known reality."[197][197] It is that "fundamental and objective *meaning* which the thing has to the mind which knows it. Such an essence is not a *mental* viewpoint; on the contrary it is *objective* and *real*. It is that reality in an essence which is the first and foremost point by which the mind recognizes the essence; and which is the root of all that must be predicted of that essence."[198][198] It is the "essence of a thing rightly conceived or known, and consists in the knowable points of reality about the thing which mark it off in his own character, and mark it as basically distinct from everything else; and, further, these knowable points constitute the root reason for all other points that belong to the idea of the thing."[199][199] The 'metaphysical essence' of man, for example, is *rational animal*. We see here in this 'metaphysical definition' two elements, distinct in concept or meaning, one of which is conceived as being 'common' (animal) and the other as 'differentiative' (rationality). *Animal* in *rational animal* expresses the constitutive element which man has in common with other sentient organisms (e.g. horses, dogs, lions, etc), while *rational* in *rational animal* expresses the constitutive element which distinguishes him from every other type of animal (only man, among the animals, is endowed with the power of reason). Because of the 'common element,' that particular something agrees with two or more other beings. Because of the 'differentiative element' the thing differs from all things which are not itself.

Now, what is the metaphysical essence of God? What is, in our human way of thinking, considered to be the most fundamental element in God's Being, the

[196][196] P. GLENN, *Theodicy*, B. Herder, St. Louis, 1949, pp. 110-111.
[197][197] P. GLENN, *op. cit*., p. 131.
[198][198] *Ibid*.
[199][199] P. GLENN, *op. cit*., p. 110.

one from which all the other elements and attributes are ultimately derived? What is that reality in God's Being which, for the human mind, must be considered to be the root-principle of all the realities which can be predicated of the Divine Being, that is, that primary and foremost characteristic by which the human mind recognizes God as God? This one perfection of God's Being must, to human cognition, be regarded as primary among the Divine perfections, so that it is the *root* that gives rise to all other Divine perfections and distinguishes God from every other being that is not God. Now, the common element in God's 'metaphysical essence' between God and creatures is 'being' (the concept here meaning 'existing being'), but what is the element that *differentiates* God from every other being? The answer is *self-subsistence*, so that we say that the metaphysical essence of God is *Self-Subsisting Being* (*Ipsum Esse Subsistens*). This is the *quasi-definition* (a description containing a common and a differentiating element) of God's metaphysical essence.[200[200]] God is *He Who Is*. This is the most proper name of God. The Angelic Doctor gives us three reasons for this: "This name *He Who Is* is most properly applied to God, for three reasons: First, because of its signification. For it does not signify form, but simply *esse* itself. Hence since the *esse* of God is His essence itself, which can be said of no other (q. 3, a. 4), it is clear that among other names this one specially denominates God, for everything is denominated by its form. Secondly, on account of its universality. For all other names are either less universal, or, if convertible with it, add something above it at least in idea; hence in a certain way they inform and determine it. Now our intellect cannot know the essence of God itself in this life, as it is in itself, but whatever mode it applies in determining what it understands about God, it falls short of the mode of what God is in Himself. Therefore the less determinate the names are, and the more universal and absolute they are, the more properly they are applied to God. Hence Damascene says (*De Fide Orth*. i) that, '*He Who Is*, is the principal of all names applied to God; for comprehending all in itself, it contains being itself as an infinite and indeterminate sea of substance.' Now by any other name some mode of substance is determined, whereas this name *He Who Is*, determines no mode of being, but is indeterminate to all; and therefore it denominates the 'infinite ocean of substance.' Thirdly, from its consignification, for it signifies present being; and this above all properly applies to God, whose being knows not past or future, as Augustine says (*De Trin*. v)."[201[201]]

[200[200]] A strict definition is done by giving a proximate genus and a specific difference. But God does not properly belong to any genus. Therefore, a strict definition of God is impossible.
[201[201]] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 13, a. 11, c.

The concept of *Self-Subsistent Being* or *Subsistent Being Itself* (*Ipsum Esse Subsistens*) in the positive sense is a fulfillment of the conditions necessary for the determination of the metaphysical essence of God. *Self-Subsistent Being* does not designate a mere mode of being, but that perfection which, according to our analogical thinking, is fundamental to God and which is the summing up of the Divine Essence. *Self-Subsistent Being* also distinguishes God fundamentally from all created beings, which merely participate in being, not being being itself. Finally, *Self-Subsistent Being* is the root from which all the other Divine perfections may logically be derived.

"Moses said to God: Lo, I shall go to the children of Israel, and say to them: The God of your fathers hath sent me to you. If they should say to me: What is his name? What shall I say to them? God said to Moses: I AM WHO AM. He said: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: HE WHO IS, hath sent me to you." [202][202]

6.12. God's Knowledge

There exists the most perfect knowledge in God: "To prove this, we must note that intelligent beings are distinguished from non-intelligent beings in that the latter possess only their own form; whereas the intelligent being is naturally adapted to have also the form of some other thing; for the idea of the thing known is in the knower. Hence it is manifest that the nature of a non-intelligent being is more contracted and limited; whereas the nature of intelligent beings has a greater amplitude and extension; therefore the Philosopher says (*De Anima* iii) that 'the soul is in a sense all things.' Now the contraction of the form comes from the matter. Hence, as we have said above (q. 7, a. 1) forms according as they are the more immaterial, approach more nearly to a kind of infinity. Therefore it is clear that the immateriality of a thing is the reason why it is cognitive; and according to the mode of immateriality is the mode of knowledge. Hence it is said in *De Anima* ii that plants do not know, because they are wholly material. But sense is cognitive because it can receive images free from matter, and the intellect is still further cognitive, because it is more separated from matter and unmixed, as said in *De Anima* iii. Since therefore God is in the highest degree of immateriality as stated above (q. 7, a. 1), it follows that He occupies the highest place in knowledge."[203][203] God knows Himself perfectly. Men have knowledge, possess knowledge; God's knowledge, instead, is what God is. Thus, His knowledge of Himself is comprehensive, that

[202][202] *Exodus* 3: 13-14.
[203][203] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 14, a. 1, c.

is, it embraces in the most perfect way the complete knowability of the thing known. In Him intellect or understanding is identified with the undivided essence and substance of God. The divine knowledge is identical with the divine Being.

6.13. The Truth of God

God is Truth itself, the First and Sovereign Truth: "Truth is found in the intellect according as it apprehends a thing as it is; and in things according as they have being conformable to an intellect. This is to the greatest degree found in God. For His being is not only conformed to His intellect, but it is the very act of His intellect; and His act of understanding is the measure and the cause of every other being and of every other intellect, and He Himself is His own act of being and act of understanding. Whence it follows not only that truth is in Him, but that He is truth itself, and the sovereign and first truth."[204][204]

6.14. God's Will

As where there is intellect there is also will, so as God is absolute intellect so is He absolute will. God does not only will Himself but also wills other things besides Himself. In willing Himself, He wills things other than Himself to which His infinite goodness freely extends. He wills creatures, beings which partake of His goodness and tend to the infinite good as to their ultimate end or goal. God necessarily wills Himself for His will is identified with Himself, and He Himself is the Necessary Being. Though He necessarily wills Himself, He, nevertheless, wills creatures freely for God has no need of creatures. "There are two ways in which a thing is said to be necessary, namely, absolutely, and by supposition. We judge a thing to be absolutely necessary from the relation of the terms, as when the predicate forms part of the definition of the subject: thus it is absolutely necessary that man is an animal. It is the same when the subject forms part of the notion of the predicate; thus it is absolutely necessary that a number must be odd or even. In this way it is not necessary that Socrates sits: wherefore it is not necessary absolutely, though it may be so by supposition; for, granted that he is sitting, he must necessarily sit, as long as he is sitting. Accordingly as to things willed by God, we must observe that He wills something of absolute necessity: but this is not true of all that He wills. For the divine will has a necessary relation to the divine goodness, since that is its proper object. Hence God wills His own goodness necessarily, even as we will our own happiness necessarily, and as any other faculty has necessary relation

[204][204] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 16, a. 5, c.

to its proper and principal object, for instance the sight to color, since it tends to it by its own nature. But God wills things apart from Himself in so far as they are ordered to His own goodness as their end. Now in willing an end we do not necessarily will things that conduce to it, unless they are such that the end cannot be attained without them; as, we will to take food to preserve life, or to take ship in order to cross the sea. But we do not necessarily will things without which the end is attainable, such as a horse for a journey which we can take on foot, for we can make the journey without one. The same applies to other means. Hence, since the goodness of God is perfect, and can exist without other things inasmuch as no perfection can accrue to Him from them, it follows that His willing things apart from Himself is not absolutely necessary. Yet it can be necessary by supposition, for supposing that He wills a thing, then He is unable not to will it, as His will cannot change."[205][205] The will of God is the cause of things: "We must hold that the will of God is the cause of things; and that He acts by the will, and not, as some have supposed, by a necessity of His nature. This can be shown in three ways: First, from the order itself of active causes. Since both intellect and nature act for an end, as proved in *Phys*. ii, 49, the natural agent must have the end and the necessary means predetermined for it by some higher intellect; as the end and definite movement is predetermined for the arrow by the archer. Hence the intellectual and voluntary agent must precede the agent that acts by nature. Hence, since God is first in the order of agents, He must act by intellect and will. This is shown, secondly, from the character of a natural agent, of which the property is to produce one and the same effect; for nature operates in one and the same way unless it be prevented. This is because the nature of the act is according to the nature of the agent; and hence as long as it has that nature, its acts will be in accordance with that nature; for every natural agent has a determinate being. Since, then, the Divine Being is undetermined, and contains in Himself the full perfection of being, it cannot be that He acts by a necessity of His nature, unless He were to cause something undetermined and indefinite in being: and that this is impossible has been already shown (q. 7, a. 2). He does not, therefore, act by a necessity of His nature, but determined effects proceed from His own infinite perfection according to the determination of His will and intellect. Thirdly, it is shown by the relation of effects to their cause. For effects proceed from the agent that causes them, in so far as they pre-exist in the agent; since every agent produces its like. Now effects pre-exist in their cause after the mode of the cause. Wherefore since the Divine Being is His own intellect, effects pre-exist in Him after the mode of intellect, and therefore proceed from Him after the same

[205][205] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 19, a. 3, c.

mode. Consequently, they proceed from Him after the mode of will, for His inclination to put in act what His intellect has conceived appertains to the will. Therefore the will of God is the cause of things."[206]

6.15. The Power of God

God has absolute power, with active power to the highest degree: "Power is twofold – namely, passive, which exists not at all in God; and active, which we must assign to Him in the highest degree. For it is manifest that everything, according as it is in act and is perfect, is the active principle of something: whereas everything is passive according as it is deficient and imperfect. Now it was shown above (q. 3, a. 2 ; q. 4, aa. 1, 2), that God is pure act, simply and in all ways perfect, nor in Him does any imperfection find place. Whence it most fittingly belongs to Him to be an active principle, and in no way whatsoever to be passive. On the other hand, the notion of active principle is consistent with active power. For active power is the principle of acting upon something else; whereas passive power is the principle of being acted upon by something else, as the Philosopher says (*Metaph*. v, 17). It remains, therefore, that in God there is active power in the highest degree."[207] God's power is infinite since His power is one with His infinite essence: "active power exists in God according to the measure in which He is actual. Now His existence is infinite, inasmuch as it is not limited by anything that receives it, as is clear from what has been said, when we discussed the infinity of the divine essence (q. 7, a. 1). Wherefore, it is necessary that the active power in God should be infinite. For in every agent is it found that the more perfectly an agent has the form by which it acts the greater its power to act. For instance, the hotter a thing is, the greater the power has it to give heat; and it would have infinite power to give heat, were its own heat infinite. Whence, since the divine essence, through which God acts, is infinite, as was shown above (q. 7, a. 1) it follows that His power likewise is infinite."[208]

6.16. The Providence of God

The all-knowing and all-wise Supreme Being throroughly understands His creation and directs it with His wisest purpose. All creatures were made to tend to God as to their last end or ultimate goal. His plan, called providence, is for them to attain that purpose. He acts to carry out the plan of providence by divine governance.

6.17. Creation by God

[206] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 19, a. 4, c.
[207] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 25, a. 1, c.
[208] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 25, a. 2, c.

God is being by necessity, that is, He is the Necessary Being, while creatures have being by participation. They have been given being by God when He created them *ex nihilo*, that is, out of nothing. That which has being by participation must must come, ultimately, from that which is Necessary Being, namely, God. In short, all creatures have their being from a creative act of God. He makes creatures come to be and He preserves them in being. He is the first efficient Cause of all things. All creatures have their first origin in creation.

CHAPTER 7

ETHICS

7.1. Definition of Ethics

Ethics is defined as *the practical science of the morality of human conduct*. It is a practical science for its data directly implies rules or directions for thought or action, and in this case, directions for human conduct. By human conduct is meant only such human activity that is deliberate and free. Ethics is the science of the morality of human conduct. Human conduct is an activity that can be in accord with the dictates of reason or against it. Now the relation (disagreement or agreement) of human activity with the dictates of reason is called morality. Ethics studies human activity to determine what acts must be in harmony with the dictates of reason. Hence, it deals with the morality of human conduct. The *material object* of ethics is *human conduct*. Its *formal object* is *the morality or rectitude of human conduct*. Ethics has two major parts: general ethics and special ethics. General ethics presents truths about human acts, and from these truths deduces the general principles of morality. Special ethics, on the other hand, is applied ethics. It applies the principles of general ethics to the different departments of human activity, both individual and social.

7.2. The Difference Between Ethics and Psychology

Ethics and psychology both deal with human behavior, with the abilities and acts of the human person. But the latter studies how man actually does behave, while the former how he ought to behave. Both study human actions though the latter studies all the actions of men as processes, while the former treats of only one class of actions: human acts (free and deliberate actions) and these only in their moral aspect. When ethics and psychology study human acts they do so from different standpoints. The recalling into mind of a valuable diamond ring, for example, concerns psychology simply as a process of recalling sensible images; but it touches ethics only if it has some moral bearing, such as arousing the desire to steal it. Ethics is dependent on psychology for much information on how the human mind works, but always passes on from how man does act to how he ought to act.

7.3. Ethics and Metaphysics

Ethics must be rooted in metaphysics. The former employs certain presuppositions which come from the latter, such as the existence of God, creation, the spirituality of the human person, the immortality of the human soul, and the existence of human freedom. These truths utilized by ethics are propositions not proved by the science in question but are presupposed by it. "They are not to be thought of as unwarranted assumptions, but rather as statements borrowed from another science whose province it is to investigate and establish them. There would result either an endless series or a circular process, were it not for the science of metaphysics. This alone rests on no deeper foundations; as the science of first principles, it takes on itself the task of testing and proving the fundamental postulates and general presuppositions of all other sciences, and thus assumes a unique position in the hierarchy of knowledge."[209][209] Let us take a presupposition of ethics like freedom of will. If man were not free, then he would not be able to choose between right and wrong, and consequently would not be responsible for his actions and would be unable to direct his destiny. Determinism destroys all meaning in ethics.

7.4. The Difference Between Ethics and Civil Law

Ethics and civil law are closely related to each other. Although both deal with law, and therefore in some way with the morality or "oughtness" of human acts, both disciplines do not always perfectly correspond. The study of civil law deals only with external acts and positive legality, whereas ethics reaches out into man's internal acts of will and the tribunal of conscience as well. There is indeed a difference between crime and sin, legal immunity and moral worth, outward respectability and true virtue of soul.

7.5. The Difference Between Ethics and Moral Theology

Though ethics and moral theology both deal with the morality of human acts, the rightness and wrongness of human conduct, they differ in the source from which they derive their knowledge and in the method of pursuing their conclusions. Moral theology proceeds from the standpoint of Divine Revelation and ecclesiastical law, whereas ethics or moral philosophy proceeds from the point of view of human reason alone. A part of philosophy, the practical, normative science of ethics is not allowed to appeal to Revelation for its facts or arguments nor should it discuss the various canons of ecclesiastical law. Ethics (or moral philosophy) is a part of philosophy, not sacred theology.

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[209][209] A. FAGOTHEY, *Right and Reason*, Tan Books, Rockford, IL, 2000, p. 26.

7.6. Human Acts and Acts of Man

A human act is an act which proceeds from the deliberate free will of man. This free act is called human because it is an act that is proper to man as man. Now, man is not just an animal but is a rational animal, that is, he has understanding and free will. So, it is only the act that proceeds from the knowing and freely willing human being that has the full character of the human act. Such an act alone is proper to man as man. The human act (*actus humanus*) is an act of which man is master, one that is consciously controlled and deliberately willed, so that the man who performs it is responsible for it. Human acts are to be distinguished from acts of man (*actus hominis*). Acts of man include man's animal acts of sensation and appetition and acts that are not deliberate and free. An act of man is an act which man performs but he is not the master of it for he has not consciously controlled it, has not deliberately willed it, and is subsequently not responsible for it. For example, a man scratching his back while asleep is an act of man, not a human act. Also, snoring and talking in one's sleep are acts of man, not human acts. There are also acts that can never be anything other than acts of man such as the circulation of blood, the operations of the organs of digestion, and physical growth. Now, the science of ethics is not concerned with acts of man but only with human acts. Only human acts are moral acts for man is responsible only for them and such acts are imputed to him as worthy of praise or blame, of reward or punishment.

7.7. Constituents of the Human Act

In order for an act to be a human act it must possess three essential elements or constituents: knowledge, freedom, and voluntariness. 1. *Knowledge*. No human act is possible without knowledge. The will itself is a blind faculty that cannot act unless enlightened by the intellect. It is the job of the intellect to propose the good to the will and the latter tends towards it. The end cannot be attained without suitable means and the intellect must present these suitable means to the will. The will is 'blind' in itself, groping in the dark, until illuminated by the intellect which proposes the end to be attained, passes judgment regarding the suitability of the means to the end, and devises a course of conduct that will efficiently lead to the end. I cannot will to go to New York if I do not know that there is such a city in the East Coast of the United States. I cannot will to eat a bunch of boysenberries if I do not know whether they exist or not. A human act proceeds from the deliberate will, deliberation here not

meaning a slow and painstaking effort, but rather, advertence, or knowledge in the mind of what one is about and what this means Thus an action can happen in a split second and still be a deliberate human act. For example, a police officer who fires back at escaping bank robbers may have shot his round in a second yet his action was deliberate. He adverts to what he is doing and thus, adverting, wills and does it. The offficer *knows* what he is doing. His knowledge makes his action deliberate. So, in ethics, deliberation means knowledge. A human act is by definition a deliberate act, that is, a knowing act.

2. *Freedom*. A human act is an act determined (elicited or commanded) by the human will and by nothing else. It is thus an act controlled by the will, an act that the will can perform or refuse to perform. Such an act is termed a free act. Therefore, every human act must be free; freedom is an essential element of it. There is a distinction between freedom and voluntariness as J. Elliot Ross explains: "Voluntariness is not quite the same as freedom. For freedom presupposes the power of self-determination, the ability not to have willed a particular action; whereas it is possible to conceive of the will as being determined by its very nature to certain acts, or to think of a man in certain rare instances being carried into action before having time to think sufficiently of non-action to allow that conception to influence his will. It is logically possible to separate the way in which an action is willed (as, for instance, directly or in its cause) from the fact that the action might not have been willed at all. Every free act is voluntary, but not every voluntary act, at least in a broad sense, is necessarily free; for the voluntariness of an act is simply that element by which it proceeds from the will."[210][210]

3. *Voluntariness*. Human acts are voluntary acts, that is, they are will-acts. In order for a human act to occur an act must not only be guided by knowledge or deliberation but must also be willed. So, an act which comes from both knowledge and will is called voluntary. This will act is not forced upon a person from without nor does it arise in a spontaneous manner from within. In a voluntary act the agent (the human subject author of his act) must know not merely the circumstances of the act, but also the end to which it leads. It is of the nature of a voluntary act that its principle be within the agent, together with some knowledge of the end. The inner principle referred here is the will itself. So we say now, a voluntary act is one which proceeds from the will with a knowledge of the end. It is a willed act wherein the agent knows what he is about to do and wills to do it.

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[210][210] J. ELLIOT ROSS, *Christian Ethics*, Devin-Adair, New York, 1929, pp. 20-21.

Thus, we have the three constituents of the human act: knowledge, freedom, and voluntariness. To illustrate this let us give an example: Harry, casually walking down the street, sees a seriously injured woman lying on the ground as a result of a hit and run accident; he is aware that it is his duty to come to the aid of this woman and to call for an ambulance (knowledge). He is free to help her or to run away, not indeed free from duty in the matter, but rather physically free to perform his duty or to leave it unperformed (freedom). In this case, Harry wills to do his duty, helping the woman and calling an ambulance (voluntariness).

7.8. Eternal Law and Natural Law

"A *law* is an ordinance of reason directed toward the common good and promulgated by the one who has the care of the community."[211][211] The *eternal law* is the plan of divine wisdom considered as directing all actions and movements of creatures to their proper end. Applied to us, the eternal law is the will of God commanding the preservation of the natural order and prohibiting its violation. St. Thomas writes, of the eternal law, that "just as in every artificer there pre-exists a type of the things that are made by his art, so too in every governor there must pre-exist the type of the order of those things that are to be done by those who are subject to his government. And just as the type of the things yet to be made by an art is called the art or exemplar of the products of that art, so too the type in him who governs the acts of his subjects, bears the character of a law, provided the other conditions be present which we have mentioned above (q. 90). Now God, by His wisdom, is the Creator of all things in relation to which He stands as the artificer to the products of his art...Moreover He governs all the acts and movements that are to be found in each single creature...Wherefore as the type of the Divine Wisdom, inasmuch as by It all things are created, has the character of art, exemplar or idea; so the type of Divine Wisdom, as moving all things to their due end, bears the character of law. Accordingly the eternal law is nothing else than the type of Divine Wisdom, as directing all actions and movements."[212][212]

Natural Law. In a strict sense, as applied to us, the *natural law* is defined as the moral law, manifested by natural reason, demanding the preservation of the natural order and forbidding its violation. It is a participation by man in the eternal law of God: "it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal

[211][211] *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 91, a. 1.
[212][212] *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 93, a. 1.

law, in so far as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends. Now among all others, the rational creature is subject to Divine providence in the most excellent way, in so far as it partakes of a share of providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Wherefore it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end: and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law…the light of natural reason, whereby we discern what is good and what is evil, which is the function of the natural law, is nothing else than an imprint on us of the Divine light. It is therefore evident that the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation of the eternal law." [213][213] The basic precept of the natural law is this: do good and avoid evil. This most basic of precepts is the root out of which definite precepts and prohibitions grow as a person advances in awareness of things and recognizes their good or their evil. The natural law embraces all such directives. Since the natural law indicates and directs a person's inclination to act in accordance with reason, and since all virtues are in accordance with reason, one can say that all the virtues are prescribed by the natural law. The natural law can but be one and the same for all men. However, we find that in a number of persons such a law is perverted by bad habits, passions or addictions. But such exceptions do not destroy the universality of the natural law. Human nature does not change and neither does the eternal law of God. Some examples of violations of the natural law include murder, adultery, fornication, theft, fraud, and false witness.

7.9. Conscience

"Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid what is evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment…For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God…His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths."[214][214]

If law is the objective basis of morality, then conscience[215][215] is the subjective basis of morality. It is not a special faculty distinct from the intellect

[213][213] *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 91, a. 2.
[214][214] VATICAN II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 16.
[215][215] For in-depth studies on conscience, see: P. PALAZZINI, *La coscienza*, Ares, Milan, 1968 ; P. DELHAYE, *The Christian Conscience*, Desclée, New York, 1968 ; W. B. SMITH, *The Meaning of Conscience*, in *Principles of Catholic Moral Life* (ed. William E. May), Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1980 ; M. ZALBA, *Papel de la conciencia en la calificación de los actos morales*, "Gregorianum," 62 (1981), pp. 135-

as man's only spiritual faculty for knowing is his intellect. If it were a distinct faculty from the intellect one's judgments regarding the rightness or wrongness of one's individual acts would be some irrational, non-intellectual product of some blind instinct. Therefore, the moral sense theory that makes conscience a special faculty distinct from the intellect cannot be accepted. Neither is conscience an inclination or habit of the intellect for it is an *act*,[216][216] a judgement or dictate of reason, the result of the application of general knowledge to specific action.[217][217] It is not a speculative judgment but rather a practical judgment bearing on something one has done or intends to do. It is a judgment regarding the goodness or evil of an action; therefore, it includes a moral assessment of an action intended, or the moral approval or disapproval of an action performed.

Conscience, a practical judgment, is the result of the application of general laws to a specific case. It does not make moral laws. Being a practical judgement, the moral laws to be applied are not established by that judgment. It does not create moral laws but rather applies general laws to a specific case. Conscience is not the final arbiter of good and evil and so the expression "freedom of conscience" is false if understood to mean an autonomous, totally subjective conscience which ignores the objective law and determines by itself what is good and evil. "The judgment of conscience has an imperative character; man must act in accordance with it…; it is the *proximate norm of personal morality*….The authority of its voice and judgments derive from the *truth* about moral good and evil, which it is called to listen to and to express. This truth is indicated by the "divine law," the *universal and objective norm of morality*. The judgment of conscience does not establish the law; rather it bears witness to the authority of the natural law and of the practical reason with reference to the supreme good, whose attractiveness the human person perceives and whose commandment he accepts."[218][218] "Conscience is not an independent and exclusive capacity to decide what is good and what is evil. Rather there is profoundly imprinted upon it a principle of obedience vis-à-vis the objective norm which establishes and conditions the correspondence of its

157 ; G. GRISEZ, *Christian Moral Principles,* Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1983, pp. 73-96 ; C. CAFARRA, *Living in Christ*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1987, pp. 107-127 ; L. MELINA, *La conoscenza morale*, Città Nuova, Rome, 1987 ; VARIOUS AUTHORS, *La coscienza morale oggi*, in *Studi in onore di Domenico Cappone* (edited by M. Nalepa and T. Kennedy, Accademia Alfonsiana, Rome, 1987 ; R. GARCIA DE HARO, *Legge, coscienza e libertà*, Ares, Milan, 1990 ; C. BURKE, *Conscience and Freedom*, Sinag-Tala, Manila, 1992 ; R. GARCIA DE HARO, *La vita cristiana. Corso di teologia morale fondamentale*, Ares, Milan, 1995, pp. 387-439.

[216][216] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 79, a. 13.

[217][217] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 19, a. 5.

[218][218] JOHN PAUL II, *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 60.

decisions with the commands and prohibitions which are at the basis of human behaviour."[219][219]

A person has a correct (or right) conscience when he judges good to be good and evil to be evil. One has an erroneous conscience when he judges evil to be good or good to be evil. "Faced with a moral choice, conscience can make either a right judgment in accordance with reason and the divine law or, on the contrary, an erroneous judgment that departs from them."[220][220]

Each of us has the responsibility to form our conscience well; it must be informed and moral judgments enlightened. "A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. Everyone must avail himself of the means to form his conscience."[221][221] The means to achieve a correct or right conscience are: 1. a good moral and religious formation where one learns the laws of the moral life in accordance with the Divine Law; 2. seeking expert advice in more difficult cases (spiritual direction); 3. prayer and meditation, seeking Divine illumination; 4. the removal of obstacles to a right judgment, such as moral disorders and bad habits, by means of the ascetical struggle; 5. a personal examination of conscience that is habitual; 6. sincerity; and 7. humility.

7.10. The Morality of Human Acts

Since man is endowed with free will he is a moral subject. When acting deliberately he is responsible for his actions. Human acts, that is, acts freely chosen in consequence of a judgment of conscience, are either good or evil. Now, the morality of human acts depends on three elements: 1. the object chosen; 2. the end in view or the intention; and 3. the circumstances of the action. All these factors make up the sources or constitutive elements of the morality of human acts.

1. *Object*. "The *object* chosen is a good toward which the will deliberately directs itself. It is the matter of a human act. The object chosen morally specifies the act of the will, insofar as reason recognizes and judges it to be or

[219][219] JOHN PAUL II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 43.
[220][220] CCC, 1799.
[221][221] CCC, 1798.

not to be in conformity with the true good. Objective norms of morality express the rational order of good and evil, attested to by conscience."[222][222]

2. *End or the Intention*. "In contrast to the object, the *intention* resides in the acting subject. Because it lies at the voluntary source of an action and determines it by its end, intention is an element essential to the moral evaluation of an action. The end is the first goal of the intention and indicates the purpose pursued in the action. The intention is a movement of the will toward the end: it is concerned with the goal of the activity. It aims at the good anticipated from the action undertaken. Intention is not limited to directing individual actions, but can guide several actions toward one and the same purpose; it can orient one's whole life toward its ultimate end. For example, a service done with the end of helping one's neighbor can at the same time be inspired by the love of God as the ultimate end of all our actions. One and the same action can also be inspired by several intentions, such as performing a service in order to obtain a favor or to boast about it.

"A good intention (for example, that of helping one's neighbor) does not make behavior that is intrinsically disordered, such as lying and calumny, good or just. The end does not justify the means. Thus the condemnation of an innocent person cannot be justified as the legitimate means of saving the nation. On the other hand, an added bad intention (such as vainglory) makes an act evil that, in and of itself, can be good (such as almsgiving)."[223][223]

3. *Circumstances*. "The circumstances, including the consequences, are secondary elements of a moral act. They contribute to increasing or diminishing the moral goodness or evil of human acts (for example, the amount of a theft). They can also diminish or increase the agent's responsibility (such as acting out of a fear of death). Circumstances of themselves cannot change the moral quality of acts themselves; they can make neither good nor right an action that is in itself evil."[224][224]

For a human act to be morally good all the constitutive elements – the object, the end or intention, and the circumstances – must be good together. "An evil end corrupts the action, even if the object is good in itself (such as praying and fasting 'in order to be seen by men'). The *object of the choice* can by itself vitiate an act in its entirety. There are some concrete acts – such as

[222][222] CCC, 1751.
[223][223] CCC, 1753-1754.
[224][224] CCC, 1754.

fornication – that it is always wrong to choose, because choosing them entails a disorder of the will, that is, a moral evil. It is therefore an error to judge the morality of human acts by considering only the intention that inspires them or the circumstances (environment, social pressure, duress or emergency, etc.) which supply their context. There are acts which, in and of themselves, independently of circumstances and intentions, are always gravely illicit by reason of their object; such as blasphemy and perjury, murder and adultery. One may not do evil so that good may result from it."[225][225] Such acts are called intrinsically evil and can never be done nor justified for any reason whatsoever. It is never licit to do evil that good may come of it (Romans 3:8).

7.11. Virtues, and Vices

Habits. A habit is a facility and readiness for acting in a definite way, acquired by the frequent repetition of a certain kind of act. It is a comparatively permanent quality disposing a thing well or ill in its being or operations. Virtues and vices are particular types of habits.

Virtues. A virtue is a permanent inclination and facility to perform morally good acts. It is a good operative habit. Cardinal virtues, which are the principle virtues among several groups of virtues, are four in number, namely, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. *Prudence* is an intellectual virtue which enables man to judge correctly in each individual case presented to him just what the moral order requires of him. It is a habit of the practical intellect. *Justice* is a moral virtue which inclines man's will to render unto each one his due. *Temperance* is the moral virtue which regulates the desire for sensible pleasure within the limits of right reason. Lastly, the moral virtue of *fortitude* inclines the will to overcome grave danger and to sustain severe hardship in the pursuit and maintenance of the moral good.

Vices. A vice is a permanent inclination and facility to perform morally bad acts. It is a bad operative habit which inclines the will to acts at variance with right reason. Pride, which is the inordinate desire for one's own excellence, is the queen of all vices. There are also seven capital vices: vainglory (an inordinate desire to manifest one's own excellence and to receive praise from men), avarice or covetousness (the inordinate love of having possessions or riches), lust (the inordinate desire for sexual pleasure), anger (the inordinate desire for revenge), gluttony (the inordinate desire for food and

[225][225] CCC, 1755-1756.

drink), envy (sadness on account of the goods possessed by another which are regarded as harmful to oneself since they diminish one's own excellence or renown), and sloth (which is sorrow in the face of spiritual good inasmuch as it is God's good, or sorrow regarding the means of salvation conferred on us and prescribed by God).

B: SPECIAL ETHICS

7.12. Society and the Common Good

Society. A society in general is the stable union or association of a number of persons for the mutual realization of a common end. It consists of a "group of persons bound together organically by a principle of unity that goes beyond each one of them. As an assembly that is at once visible and spiritual, a society endures through time: it gathers up the past and prepares for the future."[226][226] Man is by nature social, and the formation of societies by him stems from his rational and free nature. Society is natural to man. A number of characteristics of human nature reveal that man is naturally social. For example, man by nature seeks companionship; he seeks others and enjoys their company. Another characteristic: he is not completely self-sufficient. In fact, a new born baby must be fed by his parents or he or she would die. Even grown men need others for their basic necessities and goods in order to lead a decent life. Also, man is endowed with language which fits him to communicate with other men. Unless he were to live a social life, speech would be without purpose. Yet another characteristic: the intellectual and moral development of man requires constant contact with others for the communication of new ideas and technologies. How could a person develop intellectually and morally if he were stuck alone in a desert island with nothing but small quantities of food beside him?[227][227] All these characteristics show that, for man, society is something natural. He is naturally fitted and impelled to join with other persons in society.

There are a number of elements necessary for a society. A society cannot exist without its members who can only be persons; herds of animals are not societies since a society is a moral union supposing the agreement of wills. Therefore, only rational beings can form a society. A society must also be

[226][226] CCC, 1880.

[227][227] "And indeed nature, or rather God who is the author of nature, wills that man should live in a civil society; and this is clearly shown both by the faculty of language, the greatest medium of intercourse, and by numerous innate desires of the mind, and the many necessary things, and things of great importance, which men isolated cannot procure, but which they can procure when joined and associated with others"(Leo XIII, *Diuturnum*, 7).

united in a stable or enduring way. The members of the society must be able to cooperate or work together for the attainment of some end. A society is held together by moral bonds of means and end. It must also be equipped with a moral power called authority (which is the right to determine the means and direct the members in their use) in order to be able to guide the cooperative effort of the common good. The material cause of a society is its members; the formal cause is the moral bond uniting the members; the efficient cause is its founder, and in a lesser way those who keep it going; and the final cause is the end or common good sought by the members which they hope to gain by their cooperative effort.

What is the end of society? "The *human person*…is and ought to be the principle, the subject and the end of all social institutions." "In the plan of the Creator, society is a natural means which man can and must use to reach his destined end. Society is for man and not vice versa. This must not be understood in the sense of liberalistic individualism, which subordinates society to the selfish use of the individual; but only in the sense that by means of an organic union with society and by mutual collaboration the attainment of earthly happiness is placed within the reach of all."[228][228] "For nature has not formed society in order that man might look to it as an end, but in order that in it and through it he might find fitting help to his own perfection."[229][229] "The origin and the primary scope of social life is the conservation, development and perfection of the human person, helping him to realize accurately the demands and values of religion and culture set by the Creator for every man and for all mankind, both as a whole and in its natural ramifications."[230][230]

Human society has a divine origin, being constituted by God, the Author of nature, the Supreme Authority and source of all social authority. "God has made man for society, and has placed him in the company of others like himself, so that what was wanting to his nature, and beyond his attainment if left to his own resources, he might obtain by association with others. Wherefore, civil society must acknowledge God as its Founder and Parent, and must obey and reverence His power and authority."[231][231] Society must recognize God as its author, respect His laws, and honor Him. "The State…must evidently act up to the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God, by the public profession of religion. Nature and reason, commanding

[228][228] PIUS XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, 29.
[229][229] LEO XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 2.
[230][230] PIUS XII, *Christmas Message*, 1942.
[231][231] LEO XIII, *Libertas*, 21.

every individual devoutly to worship God in holiness…bind also the civil community by a like law. For men living together in society, no less than individuals, owe gratitude to God. It is He who gave it being and maintains it, and whose ever-bounteous goodness enriches it with countless blessings."[232] "If then any State aims only at external advantage and wealth, it is wont in its government to put God and the moral law aside, it wrongfully turns away from its end and from the teaching of nature, and cannot be called a community or society, but is rather a deceitful resemblance and a parody."[233] "A social teaching or a social reconstruction program which denies or prescinds from this internal relation to God of everything that regards men, is on a false course; and while it builds up with one hand, it prepares with the other the material which sooner or later will undermine and destroy the whole fabric."[234]

The Common Good. As man is by nature social, the good of each person is necessarily related to the common good, which in turn can only be defined in reference to man. What is the common good? It is "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily."[235] The common good consists of three elements: 1. respect for and promotion of the fundamental rights of the human person; 2. prosperity, or the development of the spiritual and temporal goods of society; and 3. peace or the stability and security of the group and of its members.

7.13. The Family

The Family. The domestic society of the family is the original and most fundamental natural society. *Conjugal society* is the most elementary form of domestic society and consists in the 'conjugal' relationship of a husband and wife united in marriage. The natural extension of the conjugal relationship is the 'parental relationship,' when husband and wife become parents of a child, resulting in the *family* proper. *Marriage* (also called *conjugal society*) is defined as the permanent union, lawfully formed, of a husband and wife for the procreation of children and their proper education. Marriage must be permanent and exclusive. The *primary end* of marriage is the procreation and education of children. The *secondary end* of marriage is the welfare of husband and wife in mutual companionship and assistance. The two main properties of marriage are

[232] LEO XIII, *Immortale Dei*, 3.
[233] LEO XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 2.
[234] PIUS XII, *Christmas Message*, 1942.
[235] VATICAN II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 26. Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 74, 1.

its unity (as opposed to polygamy) and its indissolubility (as opposed to divorce).

Contraception. Each and every marriage act (the conjugal act) must remain ordered *per se* to the procreation of human life. This doctrine, rooted in the natural law given by God, is based on the inseparable connection, established by the Creator and which man on is own initiative may not break, between the unitive meanings and procreative meanings which are both inherent to the conjugal act. "By its intimate structure, the conjugal act, while most closely uniting husband and wife, capacitates them for the generation of new lives, according to laws inscribed in the very being of man and of woman. By safeguarding both these essential aspects, the unitive and the procreative, the conjugal act preserves in its fullness the sense of true mutual love and its ordination towards man's most high calling to parenthood."[236][236]

Thus contraception, which separates this inseparable bond (between the unitive and procreative meanings of the marriage act), is condemned as against the natural law and intrinsically evil. "Every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible"[237][237] is intrinsically evil. Contraception can only degrade human love, degrading both husband and wife: "When couples, by means of recourse to contraception, separate these two meanings that God the Creator has inscribed in the being of man and woman and in the dynamism of their sexual communion, they act as 'arbiters' of the divine plan and they 'manipulate' and degrade human sexuality – and with it themselves and their married partner – by altering its value of 'total' self-giving. Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality…The difference, both anthropological and moral, between contraception and recourse to the rhythm of the cycle…involves in the final analysis two irreconcilable concepts of the human person and of human sexuality."[238][238] "No reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore,

[236][236] PAUL VI, *Humanae Vitae*, no. 12.
[237][237] PAUL VI, *Humanae Vitae*, no. 14.
[238][238] JOHN PAUL II, *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 32.

the conjugal is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and instrinsically vicious."[239][239] "When, therefore, through contraception, married couples remove from the exercise of their conjugal sexuality, its potential procreative capacity, they claim a power which belongs solely to God: the power to decide in a final analysis the coming into existence of a human person. They assume the qualification not of being cooperators in God's creative power, but the ultimate depositories of the source of human life. In this perspective, contraception is to be judged objectively so profoundly unlawful as never to be, for any reason justified. To think or to say the contrary is equal to maintaining that in human life situations may arise in which it is lawful not to recognize God as God."[240][240]

Abortion. There must be an absolute respect and protection for human life from the moment of conception. From the moment of conception the new human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person, the very first of his rights being the right to life. Abortion, therefore, is an abominable crime. Direct abortion, that is, abortion willed either as an end or as a means, is a grave moral evil that no one, regardless of race or creed, may condone. No law whatsoever can ever make direct abortion licit, because it is an act which is intrinsically evil. It is the killing of an innocent human being.

When does the human person begin his existence? At the moment of conception. "From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already. This has always been clear, and…modern genetic science offers clear confirmation. It has demonstrated that from the first instant there is established the programme of what this living being will be: a person, this individual person with his characteristic aspects already well determined. Right from fertilization the adventure of a human life begins…"[241][241] "In the zygote[242][242] resulting from fertilization the biological identity of a new human individual is already constituted."[243][243] "The fruit of human generation, from the first moment of its existence, that is to say from the moment the zygote has formed, demands the unconditional respect that is morally due to the human being in his

[239][239] PIUS XI, *Casti Connubii*, no. 54.
[240][240] JOHN PAUL II, *Address to Priests*, 17 September 1983.
[241][241] SCDF, *Declaration on Procured Abortion*, 18 November 1974, nos. 12-13: AAS 66 (1974), 738.
[242][242] The zygote is the cell produced when the nuclei of the two gametes have fused.
[243][243] SCDF, *Donum Vitae*, 1987, par. 22.

bodily and spiritual totality. The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception; and therefore from that same moment his rights as a person must be recognized, among which in the first place is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life."[244][244] "Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being."[245][245]

Modern science in fact supports the magisterium's defense of human personhood's beginning at conception with the fertilized ovum. In their scholarly article entitled the *Identity and Status of the Human Embryo: the Contribution of Biology*, human geneticist Angelo Serra and bioethicist Roberto Colombo explain that the zygote, the one-cell embryo is "a new cell that starts to operate as a unique system, i.e. as a unit, a living being *ontologically one*."[246][246] "*At the fusion of the gametes, a new human cell, endowed with a new and exclusive informational structure that forms the basis of its further development, begins to operate as a unit*…the zygote exists and operates from syngamy on as a being *ontologically one*, and with a *precise identity*…the zygote is *intrinsically oriented and determined to a definite development*. Both *identity* and *orientation* are due essentially to the genetic information with which it is endowed. This information, substantially invariable, is actually the basis of its *specific human appurtenance*, of its *individual singularity* or *identity*, and carries a *full coded program*."[247][247] "It is now established that the *new genome*, established in the zygote, *assumes control of the whole morphogenetic process* from the earliest stages of embryonic development."[248][248] "The *new genome*, established at fertilization, is the *basis and the steady support of the structural and functional unity of the embryo*, which develops along a trajectory that maintains a constant direction."[249][249] "*At the fusion of the two gametes, a new real human individual initiates its own existence, or life cycle*…The embryo, therefore, from the time the gametes fuse, *is a real human individual, not a potential human individual*. We believe that the insightful statements of the *Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation*, published by the Congregation for

[244][244] SCDF, *op. cit*., par. 24.
[245][245] CCC, 2274.
[246][246] A. SERRA, R. COLOMBO, *Identity and Status of the Human Embryo: the Contribution of Biology*, in *The Identity and Status of the Human Embryo. Proceedings of the Third Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1999, p. 151.
[247][247] A. SERRA, R. COLOMBO, *op. cit*., p. 153.
[248][248] A. SERRA, R. COLOMBO, *op. cit*., p. 159.
[249][249] A. SERRA, R. COLOMBO, *op. cit*., p. 161.

the Doctrine of the Faith in 1987, are scientifically correct. They read: 'Recent findings of human biological science […] recognize that in the zygote resulting from fertilization the biological identity of a new human individual is already constituted.'[250][250],,[251][251]

7.14. The State

It is natural for man to form a *civil society* or *state*, just as it is natural for him to form a domestic society. In fact, the state was an original outgrowth of the natural combination of families. The *state* is defined as a natural and perfect society, consisting of many families and individuals, established for their common good under the direction of the authority of a common ruler or government. Man is by nature a social animal and this being so, the state is a natural dictate of his nature and as such is a natural society. We call the state or civil society a *perfect* society because it possesses within itself all the means necessary for the attainment of its proper end, so that it is not dependent on any other society for the attainment of its end. In short, the state, of its very nature, is self-sufficient.

[250][250] SCDF, *Donum Vitae*, 1987, AAS, 1988, 80: 70-102, p. 82.
[251][251] A. SERRA, R. COLOMBO, *op. cit*., pp. 165-166.

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